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De Quincey's writings

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HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL

ESSAYS.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY,

AUTHOR OF

'CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM EATER,' ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.
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EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

WRITTEN BY MR. DE QUINCEY TO THE AMERICAN EDITOR OF HIS WORKS.

LASSWADE, JANUARY 8, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR:

I am on the point of revising and considerably altering, for republication in England, an edition of such amongst my writings, as it may seem proper deliberately to avow. Not that I have any intention, or consciously any reason, expressly to disown any one thing that I have ever published; but some things have sufficiently accomplished their purpose when they have met the call of that particular transient occasion in which they arose; and others, it may be thought on review, might as well have been suppressed from the very first. Things immoral would of course fall within that category; of these, however, I cannot reproach myself with ever having published so much as one. But even pure levities, simply *as* such, and without liability to any worse objection, may happen to have no justifying principle of life within them; and if, anywhere, I find such a reproach to lie against a paper

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of mine, that paper I should wish to cancel. So that, upon the whole, my new and revised edition is likely to differ by very considerable changes from the original papers; and, consequently, to that extent is likely to differ from your existing Boston reprint.

These changes, as sure to be more or less advantageous to the collection, it is my wish to place at your disposal as soon as possible, in order that you may make what use of them you see fit, be it little or much. It may so happen that the public demand will give you no opportunity for using them at all. I go on therefore to mention, that over and above these changes, which may possibly strike you as sometimes mere caprices, pulling down in order to rebuild, or turning squares into rotundas, (*diruit, ædificat, mutat quadrata rotundis,*) it is my purpose to enlarge this edition by as many new papers as I find available for such a station. These I am anxious to put into the hands of your house, and, so far as regards the U. S., of *your* house exclusively; not with any view to further emolument, but as an acknowledgment of the services which you have already rendered me; viz. first, in having brought together so widely scattered a collection — a difficulty which in my own hands by too painful an experience, I had found from nervous depression to be absolutely insurmountable; secondly, in having made me a participator in the pecuniary profits of the American edition, without solicitation or

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the shadow of any expectation on my part, without any legal claim that I could plead, or equitable warrant in established usage, solely and merely upon your own spontaneous motion. Some of these new papers, I hope, will not be without their value in the eyes of those who have taken an interest in the original series. But at all events, good or bad, they are now tendered to the appropriation of your individual house, the Messrs. TICKNOR AND FIELDS, according to the amplest extent of any power to make such a transfer that I may be found to possess by law or custom in America.

I wish this transfer were likely to be of more value. But the veriest trifle, interpreted by the spirit in which I offer it, may express my sense of the liberality manifested throughout this transaction by your honorable house.

Ever believe me, my dear sir,

Your faithful and obliged,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

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PHILOSOPHY OF ROMAN HISTORY.

[1839.]

It would be thought strange indeed, if there should exist a large, a memorable section of history, traversed by many a scholar with various objects, reviewed by many a reader in a spirit of anxious scrutiny, and yet to this hour misunderstood; erroneously appreciated; its tendencies mistaken, and its whole meaning, import, value, not so much inadequately — as falsely, ignorantly, perversely — deciphered. *Primâ facie*, one would pronounce this impossible. Nevertheless it is a truth; and it is a solemn truth; and what gives to it this solemnity, is the mysterious meaning, the obscure hint of a still profounder meaning in the background, which begins to dawn upon the eye when first piercing the darkness now resting on the subject. Perhaps no one arc or segment, detached from the total cycle of human records, promises so much beforehand — so much instruction, so much gratification to curiosity, so much splendor, so much depth of interest, as the great period — the systole and diastole, flux and reflux — of the Western Roman Empire. Its parentage was magnificent and Titanic. It was a birth out of the death-struggles of the colossal republic: its foundations were laid by that sublime

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dictator, 'the foremost man of all this world,' who was unquestionably for comprehensive talents the Lucifer, the Protagonist of all antiquity. Its range, the compass of its extent, was appalling to the imagination. Coming last amongst what are called the great monarchies of Prophecy, it was the only one which realized in perfection the idea of a *monarchia*, being (except for Parthia and the great fable of India beyond it) strictly coincident with ἡ οἰκουμένη, or the civilized world. Civilization and this empire were commensurate: they were interchangeable ideas, and co-extensive. Finally, the path of this great Empire, through its arch of progress, synchronized with that of Christianity: the ascending orbit of each was pretty nearly the same, and traversed the same series of generations. These elements, in combination, seemed to promise a succession of golden harvests: from the specular station of the Augustan age, the eye caught glimpses by anticipation of some glorious El Dorado for human hopes. What was the practical result for our historic experience? Answer — A sterile Zaarrah. Prelibations, as of some heavenly vintage, were inhaled by the Virgils of the day looking forward in the spirit of prophetic rapture; whilst in the very sadness of truth, from that age forwards the Roman world drank from stagnant marshes. A Paradise of roses was prefigured: a wilderness of thorns was found.

Even this fact has been missed — even the bare fact has been overlooked; much more the causes, the principles, the philosophy of this fact. The rapid barbarism which closed in behind Cæsar's chariot wheels, has been hid by the pomp and equipage of the imperial court. The vast power and domination

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of the Roman empire, for the three centuries which followed the battle of Actium, have dazzled the historic eye, and have had the usual reaction on the power of vision; a dazzled eye is always left in a condition of darkness. The battle of Actium was followed by the final conquest of Egypt. That conquest rounded and integrated the glorious empire; it was now circular as a shield — orbicular as the disk of a planet: the great Julian arch was now locked into the cohesion of granite by its last key-stone. From that day forward, for three hundred years, there was silence in the world: no muttering was heard: no eye winked beneath the wing. Winds of hostility might still rave at intervals: but it was on the outside of the mighty empire: it was at a dream-like distance; and, like the storms that beat against some monumental castle, 'and at the doors and windows seem to call,' they rather irritated and vivified the sense of security, than at all disturbed its luxurious lull.

That seemed to all men the consummation of political wisdom — the ultimate object of all strife — the very euthanasy of war. Except on some fabulous frontier, armies seemed gay pageants of the Roman rank rather than necessary bulwarks of the Roman power: spear and shield were idle trophies of the past: 'the trumpet spoke not to the alarmed throng.' Hush, ye palpitations of Rome! was the cry of the superb Aurelian,[1] from his far-off pavilion in the deserts of the Euphrates — Hush, fluttering heart of the eternal city! Fall back into slumber, ye wars, and rumors of wars! Turn upon your couches of down, ye children of Romulus — sink back into your

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voluptuous repose: We, your almighty armies, have chased into darkness those phantoms that had broken your dreams. We have chased, we have besieged, we have crucified, we have slain. '*Nihil est, Romulei Quirites, quod timere possitis. Ego efficiam ne sit aliqua solicitudo Romana. Vacate ludis — vacate circensibus. Nos publicæ necessitates teneant: vos occupent voluptates.*' Did ever Siren warble so dulcet a song to ears already prepossessed and medicated with spells of Circean effeminacy?

But in this world all things re-act: and the very extremity of any force is the seed and nucleus of a counter-agency. You might have thought it as easy (in the words of Shakspeare) to

> 'Wound the loud winds, or with be-mock'd-at stabs
> Kill the still-closing waters,'

as to violate the majesty of the imperial eagle, or to ruffle 'one dowle that's in his plume.' But luxurious ease is the surest harbinger of pain; and the dead lulls of tropical seas are the immediate forerunners of tornadoes. The more absolute was the security obtained by Cæsar for his people, the more inevitable was his own ruin. Scarcely had Aurelian sung his requiem to the agitations of Rome, before a requiem was sung by his assassins to his own warlike spirit. Scarcely had Probus, another Aurelian, proclaimed the eternity of peace, and, by way of attesting his own martial supremacy, had commanded 'that the brazen throat of war should cease to roar,' when the trumpets of the four winds proclaimed his own death by murder. Not as anything extraordinary; for, in fact, violent death — death by assassination — was the regular portal (the

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porta Libitina, or funeral gate) through which the Cæsars passed out of this world; and to die in their beds was the very rare exception to that stern rule of fate. Not, therefore, as in itself at all noticeable, but because this particular murder of Probus stands scenically contrasted with the great vision of *Peace*, which he fancied as lying in clear revelation before him, permit us, before we proceed with our argument, to rehearse his golden promises. The sabres were already unsheathed, the shirt-sleeves were already pushed up from those murderous hands, which were to lacerate his throat, and to pierce his heart, when he ascended the Pisgah from which he descried the Saturnian ages to succeed: — '*Brevi*,' said he, '*milites non necessarios habebimus. Romanus jam miles erit nullus. Omnia possidebimus. Respublica orbis terrarum, ubique secura, non arma fabricabit. Boves habebuntur aratro: equus nascetur ad pacem. Nulla erunt bella: nulla captivitas. Ubique pax: ubique Romana leges: ubique judices nostri.*' The historian himself, tame and creeping as he is in his ordinary style, warms in sympathy with the Emperor: his diction blazes up into a sudden explosion of prophetic grandeur: and he adopts all the views of Cæsar. 'Nonne omnes barbaras nationes subjecerat pedibus?' he demands with lyrical tumult: and then, while confessing the immediate disappointment of his hopes, thus repeats the great elements of the public felicity whenever they should be realized by a Cæsar equally martial for others, but more fortunate for himself: — '*Æternos thesauros haberet Romana respublica. Nihil expenderetur à principe; nihil à possessore redderetur. Aureum profecto seculum promittebat. Nulla futura*

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erant castra: nusquam lituus audiendus: arma non erant fabricanda. Populus iste militantium, qui nunc bellis civilibus Rempublicam vexat' — aye! how was *that* to be absorbed? How would that vast crowd of half-pay *emeriti* employ itself? *'Araret: studiis incumberet: erudiretur artibus: navigaret.'* And he closes his prophetic raptures thus: *'Adde quod nullus occideretur in bello. Dii boni! quid tandem vos offenderet Respublicâ Romanâ, cui talem principem sustulistis?'*

Even in his lamentations, it is clear that he mourns as for a blessing delayed — not finally denied. The land of promise still lay, as before, in steady vision below his feet; only that it waited for some happier Augustus, who, in the great lottery of Cæsarian destinies, might happen to draw the rare prize of a prosperous reign not prematurely blighted by the assassin; with whose purple *alourgis* might mingle no *fasciæ* of crape — with whose imperial laurels might entwine no ominous cypress. The hope of a millennial armistice, of an eternal rest for the earth, was not dead: once again only, and for a time, it was sleeping in abeyance and expectation. That blessing, that millennial blessing, it seems, might be the gift of Imperial Rome.

II. — Well: and why not? the reader demands. What have we to say against it? This Cæsar, or that historian, may have carried his views a little too far, or too prematurely; yet, after all, the very enormity of what they promised must be held to argue the enormity of what had been accomplished. To give any plausibility to a scheme of perpetual peace, war must already have become rare and must have been ban-

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ished to a prodigious distance. It was no longer the hearths and the altars, home and religious worship, which quaked under the tumults of war. It was the purse which suffered — the exchequer of the state; secondly, the exchequer of each individual; thirdly, and in the end, the interests of agriculture, of commerce, of navigation. This is what the historian indicates, in promising his brother Romans that '*omnia possidebimus:*' by which, perhaps, he did not mean to lay the stress on '*omnia*,' as if, in addition to their own property, they were to have that of alien or frontier nations, but (laying the stress on the word *possidebimus*) meant to say, with regard to property already their own — 'We shall no longer hold it as joint proprietors with the state, and as liable to fluctuating taxation, but shall henceforwards *possess it* in absolute exclusive property.' This is what he indicates in saying — *Boves habebuntur aratro:* that is, the oxen, one and all available for the plough, shall no longer be open to the everlasting claims of the public *frumentarii* for conveying supplies to the frontier armies. This is what he indicates in saying of the individual liable to military service — that he should no longer live to slay or to be slain, for barren bloodshed or violence, but that henceforth '*araret*,' or '*navigaret*.' All these passages, by pointing the expectations emphatically to benefits of purse exonerated, and industry emancipated, sufficiently argue the class of interests which then suffered by war: that it was the interests of private property, of agricultural improvement, of commercial industry, upon which exclusively fell the evils of a belligerent state under the Roman empire: and there already lies a mighty blessing achieved for social

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existence — when sleep is made sacred, and thresholds secure; when the temple of human life is safe, and the temple of female honor is hallowed. These great interests, it is admitted, were sheltered under the mighty dome of the Roman empire: that is already an advance made towards the highest civilization: and this is not shaken because a particular emperor should be extravagant, or a particular historian romantic.

No, certainly: but stop a moment at this point. Civilization, to the extent of security for life, and the primal rights of man, necessarily grows out of every strong government. And it follows also — that, as this government widens its sphere — as it pushes back its frontiers, *ultra et Garamantas et Indos*, in that proportion will the danger diminish (for in fact the possibility diminishes) of foreign incursions. The sense of permanent security from conquest, or from the inroad of marauders, must of course have been prodigiously increased when the nearest standing army of Rome was beyond the Tigris and the Inn — as compared with those times when Carthage, Spain, Gaul, Macedon, presented a ring-fence of venomous rivals, and when every little nook in the eastern Mediterranean swarmed with pirates. Thus far, inevitably, the Roman police, planting one foot of his golden compasses in the same eternal centre, and with the other describing an arch continually wider, must have banished all idea of public enemies, and have deepened the sense of security beyond calculation. Thus far we have the benefits of police; and those are amongst the earliest blessings of civilization; and they are one indispensable condition — what in logic is called the *conditio sine qua non*, for all the other blessings. But that, in other

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words, is a *negative* cause, (a cause which, being absent, the effect is absent;) but not the *positive* cause, (or *causa sufficiens*,) which, being present, the effect will be present. The security of the Roman empire was the indispensable condition, but not in itself a sufficient cause of those other elements which compose a true civilization. Rome was the centre of a high police, which radiated to Parthia eastwards, to Britain westwards, but not of a high civilization.

On the contrary, what we maintain is — that the Roman civilization was imperfect *ab intra* — imperfect in its central principle; was a piece of watchwork that began to go down — to lose its spring; and was slowly retrograding to a dead stop, from the very moment that it had completed its task of foreign conquest: that it was kept going from the very first by strong reaction and antagonism: that it fell into torpor from the moment when this antagonism ceased to operate; that thenceforwards it oscillated backwards violently to barbarism: that, left to its own principles of civilization, the Roman empire was barbarizing rapidly from the time of Trajan: that abstracting from all alien agencies whatever, whether accelerating or retarding, and supposing Western Rome to have been thrown exclusively upon the resources and elasticity of her own proper civilization, she was crazy and superannuated by the time of Commodus — must soon have gone to pieces — must have foundered; and, under any possible benefit from favorable accidents co-operating with alien forces, could not, by any great term, have retarded that doom which was written on her drooping energies, prescribed by internal decay, and not at all (as is universally imagined) by external assault.

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III. —'Barbarizing rapidly!' the reader murmurs —'Barbarism! Oh, yes, I remember the Barbarians broke in upon the Western Empire — the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Burgundians, Huns, Heruli, and swarms beside. These wretches had no taste — no literature, probably very few ideas; and naturally they barbarized and rebarbarized wherever they moved. But surely the writer errs: this influx of barbarism was not in Trajan's time at the very opening of the second century from Christ, but throughout the fifth century.' No, reader; it is not we who err, but you. . These were not the barbarians of Rome. That is the miserable fiction of Italian vanity, always stigmatizing better men than themselves by the name of barbarians; and in fact we all know, that to be an ultramontane is with them to be a barbarian. The horrible charge against the Greeks of old, viz., that *sua tantum mirantur*, a charge implying in its objects the last descent of narrow sensibility and of illiterate bigotry, in modern times has been true only of two nations, and those two are the French and the Italians. But, waiving the topic, we affirm — and it is the purpose of our essay to affirm — that the barbarism of Rome grew out of Rome herself; that these pretended barbarians — Gothic, Vandalish,[2] Lombard — or by whatever name known to modern history — were in reality the restorers and regenerators of the effete Roman intellect; that, but for them, the indigenous Italian would probably have died out in scrofula, madness, leprosy; that the sixth or seventh century would have seen the utter extinction of these Italian *strulbrugs;* for which opinion, if it were important, we could show cause. But it is much less important to show cause in behalf of this negative proposition —

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'that the Goths and Vandals were *not* the barbarians of the western empire' — than in behalf of this affirmative proposition, 'that the Romans *were*.' We do not wish to overlay the subject, but simply to indicate a few of the many evidences which it is in our power to adduce. We mean to rely, for the present, upon four arguments, as exponents of the barbarous and barbarizing tone of feeling, which, like so much moss or lichens, had gradually overgrown the Roman mind, and by the third century had strangled all healthy vegetation of natural and manly thought. During this third century it was, in its latter half, that most of the Augustan history was probably composed. Laying aside the two Victors, Dion Cassius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and a few more indirect notices of history during this period, there is little other authority for the annals of the Western Empire than this Augustan history; and at all events, this is the chief well-head of that history; hither we must resort for most of the personal biography, and the portraiture of characters connected with that period; and here only we find the regular series of princes — the whole gallery of Cæsars, from Trajan to the immediate predecessor of Dioclesian. The composition of this work has been usually distributed amongst six authors, viz., Spartian, Capitolinus, Lampridius, Volcatius Gallicanus, Trebellius Pollio, and Vopiscus. Their several shares, it is true, have been much disputed to and fro; and other questions have been raised, affecting the very existence of some amongst them. But all this is irrelevant to our present purpose, which applies to the work, but not at all to the writers, excepting in so far as they (by whatever names known) were notoriously and demonstrably per-

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sons belonging to that era, trained in Roman habits of thinking, connected with the court, intimate with the great Palatine officers, and therefore presumably men of rank and education. We rely, in so far as we rely at all upon this work, upon these two among its characteristic features: 1st, Upon the quality and style of its biographic notices; 2dly, Upon the remarkable uncertainty which hangs over all lives a little removed from the personal cognizance or immediate era of the writer. But as respects, not the history, but the subjects of the history, we rely, 3dly, Upon the peculiar traits of feeling which gradually began to disfigure the ideal conception of the Roman Cæsar in the minds of his subjects; 4thly, Without reference to the Augustan history, or to the subjects of that history, we rely generally, for establishing the growing barbarism of Rome, upon the condition of the Roman literature after the period of the first twelve Cæsars.

IV. — First of all, we infer the increasing barbarism of the Roman mind from the quality of the personal notices and portraitures exhibited throughout these biographical records. The whole may be described by one word — *anecdotage*. It is impossible to conceive the dignity of history more degraded than by the petty nature of the anecdotes which compose the bulk of the communications about every Cæsar, good or bad, great or little. They are not merely domestic and purely personal, when they ought to have been Cæsarian, Augustan, imperatorial — they pursue Cæsar not only to his fireside, but into his bed-chamber, into his bath, into his cabinet, nay, even (*sit honor auribus!*) into his cabinet d'aisance; not merely into the Palatine

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closet, but into the Palatine water-closet. Thus of Heliogabalus we are told — '*onus ventris auro excepit — minxit myrrhinis et onychinis;*' that is, Cæsar's *lasanum* was made of gold, and his *matula* was made of onyx, or of the undetermined *myrrhine* material. And so on, with respect to the dresses of Cæsar; — how many of every kind he wore in a week — of what material they were made — with what ornaments. So again, with respect to the meals of Cæsar; — what dishes, what condiments, what fruits, what confection prevailed at each course; what wines he preferred; how many glasses (*cyathos*) he usually drank, whether he drank more when he was angry; whether he diluted his wine with water; half-and-half, or how? Did he get drunk often? How many times a week? What did he generally do when he was drunk? How many chemises did he allow to his wife? How were they fringed? At what cost per chemise?

In this strain — how truly worthy of the children of Romulus — how becoming to the descendants from Scipio Africanus, from Paulus Æmilius, from the colossal Marius and the godlike Julius — the whole of the Augustan history moves. There is a superb line in Lucan which represents the mighty phantom of Paulus standing at a banquet to reproach or to alarm —

'Et Pauli ingentem stare miraberis umbram!'

What a horror would have seized this Augustan scribbler, this Roman Tims, if he could have seen this 'mighty phantom' at his elbow looking over his inanities; and what a horror would have seized the phantom! Once, in the course of his aulic memorabilia, the writer is struck with a sudden glimpse of such an

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idea; and he reproaches himself for recording such infinite littleness. After reporting some anecdotes, in the usual Augustan style, about an Imperial rebel, as for instance that he had ridden upon ostriches, (which he says was the next thing to flying;) that he had eaten a dish of boiled hippopotamus;[3] and that, having a fancy for tickling the catastrophes of crocodiles, he had anointed himself with crocodile fat, by which means he humbugged the crocodiles, ceasing to be Cæsar, and passing for a crocodile — swimming and playing amongst them; these glorious facts being recorded, he goes on to say — '*Sed hæc scire quid prodest? Cum et Livius et Sallustius taceant res leves de iis quorum vitas scribendas arripuerint. Non enim scimus quales mulos Clodius habuerit; nec utrum Tusco equo sederit Catilina an Sardo; vel quali chlamyde Pompeius usus fuerit, an purpurâ.*' No: we do *not* know. Livy would have died 'in the high Roman fashion' before he would have degraded himself, by such babble of nursery-maids, or of palace pimps and eaves-droppers.

But it is too evident that babble of this kind grew up not by any accident, but as a natural growth, and by a sort of physical necessity, from the condition of the Roman mind after it had ceased to be excited by opposition in foreign nations. It was not merely the extinction of republican institutions which operated, (that might operate as a co-cause,) but, had these institutions even survived, the unresisted energies of the Roman mind, having no purchase, nothing to push against, would have collapsed. The eagle, of all birds, would be the first to flutter and sink plumb down, if the atmosphere should make no resistance to

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his wings. The first Roman of note who began this system of anecdotage was Suetonius. In him the poison of the degradation was much diluted, by the strong remembrances, still surviving, of the mighty republic. The glorious sunset was still burning with gold and orange lights in the west. True, the disease had commenced; but the habits of health were still strong for restraint and for conflict with its power. Besides that, Suetonius graces his minutiæ, and embalms them in amber, by the exquisite finish of his rhetoric. But his case, coming so early among the Cæsarian annals, is sufficient to show that the growth of such history was a spontaneous growth from the circumstances of the empire, viz. from the total collapse of all public antagonism.

The next literature in which the spirit of anecdotage arose was that of France. From the age of Louis Treize, or perhaps of Henri Quatre, to the Revolution, this species of chamber memoirs — this eaves-dropping biography — prevailed so as to strangle authentic history. The parasitical plant absolutely killed the supporting tree. And one remark we will venture to make on that fact; the French literature would have been killed, and the national mind reduced to the *strulbrug* condition, had it not been for the situation of France amongst other great kingdoms, making her liable to potent reactions from them. The Memoirs of France, that is, the valet-de-chambre's archives substituted for the statesman's, the ambassador's, the soldier's, the politican's, would have extinguished all other historic composition, as in fact they nearly did, but for the insulation of France amongst nations with more masculine habits of thought. That saved France.

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Rome had no such advantage; and Rome gave way. The props, the buttresses, of the Roman intellect, were all cancered and honeycombed by this dry-rot in her political energies. One excuse there is: storms yield tragedies for the historian; the dead calms of a universal monarchy leave him little but personal memoranda. In such a case he is nothing, if he is not anecdotical.

V. — Secondly, we infer the barbarism of Rome, and the increasing barbarism, from the inconceivable ignorance which prevailed throughout the Western Empire, as to the most interesting public facts that were not taken down on the spot by a *tachygraphus* or short-hand reporter. Let a few years pass, and everything was forgotten about everybody. Within a few years after the death of Aurelian, though a kind of saint amongst the armies and the populace of Rome, (for to the Senate he was odious,) no person could tell who was the Emperor's mother, or where she lived; though she must have been a woman of station and notoriety in her lifetime, having been a high priestess at some temple unknown. Alexander Severus, a very interesting Cæsar, who recalls to an Englishman the idea of his own Edward the Sixth, both as a prince equally amiable, equally disposed to piety, equally to reforms, and because, like Edward, he was so placed with respect to the succession and position of his reign, between unnatural monsters and bloody exterminators, as to reap all the benefit of contrast and soft relief; — this Alexander was assassinated. That was of course. But still, though the fact was of course, the motives often varied, and the circumstances varied; and the

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reader would be glad to know, in Shakspeare's language, 'for which of his virtues' it was deemed requisite to murder him; as also, if it would not be too much trouble to the historian, who might be the murderers; and what might be their rank, and their names, and their recompense — whether a halter or a palace. But nothing of all this can be learned. And why? All had been forgotten.[4] Lethe had sent all her waves over the whole transaction; and the man who wrote within thirty years, found no vestige recoverable of the imperial murder more than you or we, reader, would find at this day, if we should search for fragments of that imperial tent in which the murder happened. Again, with respect to the princes who succeeded immediately to their part of the Augustan history now surviving, princes the most remarkable, and *cardinal* to the movement of history, viz., Dioclesian and Constantine, many of the weightiest transactions in their lives are washed out as by a sponge. Did Dioclesian hang himself in his garters? or did he die in his bed? Nobody knows. And if Dioclesian hanged himself, why did Dioclesian hang himself? Nobody can guess. Did Constantine, again, marry a second wife? — did this second wife fall in love with her step-son Crispus? — did she, in resentment of his scorn, bear false witness against him to his father? — did his father, in consequence, put him to death? What an awful domestic tragedy! — was it true? Nobody knows. On the one hand, Eusebius does not so much as allude to it; but, on the other hand, Eusebius had his golden reasons for favoring Constantine, and this was a matter to be hushed up rather than blazoned. Tell it not in Gath! Publish it not

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in Askelon! Then again, on the one hand, the tale seems absolutely a leaf torn out of the Hippolytus of Euripides. It is the identical story, only the name is changed; Constantine is Theseus, his new wife is Phædra, Crispus is Hippolytus. So far it seems rank with forgery. Yet again, on the other hand, such a duplicate did *bonâ fide* occur in modern history. Such a domestic tragedy was actually rehearsed, with one unimportant change; such a leaf was positively torn out of Euripides. Philip II. played the part of Theseus, Don Carlos the part of Hippolytus, and the Queen filled the situation (without the *animus*) of Phædra. Again, therefore, one is reduced to blank ignorance, and the world will never know the true history of the Cæsar who first gave an establishment and an earthly throne to Christianity, because history had slept the sleep of death before that Cæsar's time, and because the great muse of history had descended from Parnassus, and was running about Cæsar's palace in the bedgown and slippers of a chambermaid.

Many hundred of similar *lacunæ* we could assign, with regard to facts the most indispensable to be known; but we must hurry onwards. Meantime, let the reader contrast with this dearth of primary facts in the history of the empire, and their utter extinction after even the lapse of twenty years, the extreme circumstantiality of the republican history, through many centuries back.

VI. — Thirdly, we infer the growing barbarism of Rome, that is, of the Roman people, as well as the Roman armies, from the brutal, bloody, and Tartar style of their festal exultations after victory, and the

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Moloch sort of character, and functions with which they gradually invested their great Sultan, the Cæsar. One of the *ballisteia*, that is, the *ballets* or dances carried through scenes and representative changes, which were performed by the soldiery and by the mobs of Rome upon occasion of any triumphal display, has been preserved, in so far as relates to the words which accompanied the performance; for there was always a verbal accompaniment to the choral parts of the *ballisteia*. These words ran thus: —

'Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, [six times repeated] decollavimus.
Unus homo mille, mille, mille, mille, [four times] decollavit
Mille, mille, mille, vivat annos, qui mille, mille occidit.
Tantum vini habet nemo, quantum Cæsar fudit sanguinis.'

And again, a part of a *ballisteion* runs thus: —

'Mille Francos, mille Sarmatas, semel occidimis:
Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, Persas quærimus.'

But, in reality, the national mind was convulsed and revolutionized by many causes; and we may be assured that it must have been so, both as a cause and as an effect, before that mind could have contemplated with steadiness the fearful scene of Turkish murder and bloodshed going on forever in high places. The palace floors in Rome actually rocked and quaked with assassination: snakes were sleeping forever beneath the flowers and palms of empire: the throne was built upon coffins: and any Christian who had read the Apocalypse, whenever he looked at the altar consecrated to Cæsar, on which the sacred fire was burning forever in the Augustan halls, must have seen below them 'the souls of those who had been martyred,' and have fancied that he heard them crying out to the angel of retribution — 'How long? O Lord! how long?'

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Gibbon has left us a description, not very powerful, of a case which is all-powerful of itself, and needs no expansion, — the case of a state criminal vainly attempting to escape or hide himself from Cæsar — from the arm wrapped in clouds, and stretching over kingdoms alike, or oceans, that arrested and drew back the wretch to judgment — from the inevitable eye that slept not nor slumbered, and from which, neither Alps interposing, nor immeasurable deserts, nor trackless seas, nor a four months' flight, nor perfect innocence could screen him. The world — the world of civilization, was Cæsar's: and he who fled from the wrath of Cæsar, said to himself, of necessity — 'If I go down to the sea, there is Cæsar on the shore; if I go into the sands of Bilidulgerid, there is Cæsar waiting for me in the desert; if I take the wings of the morning, and go to the utmost recesses of wild beasts, there is Cæsar before me.' All this makes the condition of a criminal under the Western Empire terrific, and the condition even of a subject perilous. But how strange it is, or would be so, had Gibbon been a man of more sensibility, that he should have overlooked the converse of the case, viz., the terrific condition of Cæsar, amidst the terror which he caused to others. In fact, both conditions were full of despair. But Cæsar's was the worst, by a great pre-eminence; for the state criminal could not be made such without his own concurrence; for one moment, at least, it had been within his choice to be no criminal at all; and then for him the thunderbolts of Cæsar slept. But Cæsar had rarely any choice as to his own election; and for him, therefore, the dagger of the assassin never *could* sleep. Other men's houses, other men's bedchambers,

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were generally asylums; but for Cæsar, his own palace had not the privileges of a home. His own armies were no guards — his own pavilion, rising in the very centre of his armies sleeping around him, was no sanctuary. In all these places had Cæsar many times been murdered. All these pledges and sanctities — his household gods, the majesty of the empire, the 'sacramentum militare,' — all had given way, all had yawned beneath his feet.

The imagination of man can frame nothing so awful — the experience of man has witnessed nothing so awful, as the situation and tenure of the Western Cæsar. The danger which threatened him was like the pestilence which walketh in darkness, but which also walketh in noon-day. Morning and evening, summer and winter, brought no change or shadow of turning to this particular evil. In that respect it enjoyed the immunities of God — it was the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. After three centuries it had lost nothing of its virulence; it was growing worse continually: the heart of man ached under the evil, and the necessity of the evil. Can any man measure the sickening fear which must have possessed the hearts of the ladies and the children composing the imperial family? To them the mere terror, entailed like an inheritance of leprosy upon their family above all others, must have made it a woe like one of the evils in the Revelations — such in its infliction — such in its inevitability. It was what Pagan language denominated 'a *sacred* danger;' a danger charmed and consecrated against human alleviation.

At length, but not until about three hundred and twenty years of murder had elapsed from the inaugu-

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ral murder of the great imperial founder, Dioclesian rose, and as a last resource of despair, said, let us multiply our image, and try if that will discourage our murderers. Like Kehama, entering the eight gates of Padalon at once, and facing himself eight times over, he appointed an assessor for himself; and each of these co-ordinate Augusti having a subordinate Cæsar, there were in fact four coeval emperors. Cæsar enjoyed a perfect *alibi:* like the royal ghost in Hamlet, Cæsar was *hic et ubique.* And unless treason enjoyed the same ubiquity, now, at least, one would have expected that Cæsar might sleep in security. But murder — imperial murder — is a Briareus. There was a curse upon the throne of Western Rome: it rocked like the sea, and for some mysterious reason could not find rest; and few princes were more memorably afflicted than the immediate successors to this arrangement.

A nation living in the bosom of these funereal convulsions, this endless billowy oscillation of prosperous murder and thrones overturned, could not have been moral; and therefore could not have reached a high civilization, had other influences favored. No causes act so fatally on public morality as convulsions in the state. And against Rome, all other influences combined. It was a period of awful transition. It was a period of tremendous conflict between all false religions in the world, (for thirty thousand gods were worshipped in Rome,) and a religion too pure to be comprehended. That light could not be comprehended by that darkness. And, in strict philosophic truth, Christianity did not reach its mature period, even of infancy, until the days of the Protestant

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Reformation. In Rome it has always blended with Paganism: it does so to this day. But *then, i. e.* up to Dioclesian, (or the period of the Augustan history,) even that sort of Christianity, even this foul adulteration of Christianity, had no national influence. Even a pure and holy religion, therefore, by arraying demoniac passions on the side of Paganism, contributed to the barbarizing of Western Rome.

VII. — Finally, we infer the barbarism of Rome from the condition of her current literature. Anything more contemptible than the literature of Western (or indeed of Eastern) Rome after Trajan, it is not possible to conceive. Claudian, and two or three others, about the times of Carinus, are the sole writers in verse through a period of four centuries. Writers in prose there are none after Tacitus and the younger Pliny. Nor in Greek literature is there one man of genius after Plutarch, excepting Lucian. As to Libanius, he would have been 'a decent priest where monkeys are the gods;' and he was worthy to fumigate with his leaden censer, and with incense from such dull weeds as root themselves in Lethe, that earthly idol of modern infidels, the shallow but at the same time stupid Julian. Upon this subject, however, we may have two summary observations to make: — 1st, It is a fatal ignorance in disputing, and has lost many a good cause, not to perceive on which side rests the *onus* of proof. Here, because on our allegation the proposition to be proved would be negative, the *onus probandi* must lie with our opponents. For we peremptorily affirm, that from Trajan downwards, there was no literature in Rome. To prove a negative is impossible. But any opponent,

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who takes the affirmative side, and says there *was*, will find it easy to refute us. Only be it remembered, that one swallow does not make a summer. 2dly, (Which, if true, ought to make all writers on general literature ashamed,) we maintain — that in any one period of sixty years, in any one of those centuries which we call so familiarly the Dark Ages, (yes, even in the 10th or 11th,) we engage to name more and better books as the product of the period given, than were produced in the whole three hundred and fifty years from Trajan to Honorius and Attila. Here, therefore, is at once a great cause, a great effect, and a great exponent of the barbarism which had overshadowed the Western Empire before either Goth or Vandal had gained a settlement in the land. The quality of their history, the tenure of the Cæsars, the total abolition of literature, and the convulsion of public morals, — these were the true key to the Roman decay.

Note.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 8.

'*Of the superb Aurelian:*' — The particular occasion was the insurrection in the East, of which the ostensible leaders were the great lieutenants of Palmyra — Odenathus, and his widow, Zenobia. The alarm at Rome was out of all proportion to the danger, and well illustrated the force of the great historian's aphorism — *Omne ignotum pro magnifico.* In one sentence of his despatch, Aurelian aimed at a contest with the great Julian

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gasconade of *Veni, vidi, vici.* His words are — *Fugavimus, obsedimus, cruciavimus, occidimus.*

NOTE 2. Page 10.

'*Pretended barbarians, Gothic, Vandalish,*' *&c.* — Had it been true that these tramontane people were as ferocious in manners or appearance as was alleged, it would not therefore have followed that they were barbarous in their modes of thinking and feeling; or, if that also had been true, surely it became the Romans to recollect what very barbarians, both in mind, and manners, and appearance, were some of their own Cæsars. Meantime it appears, that not only Alaric the Goth, but even Attila the Hun, in popular repute the most absolute Ogre of all the Transalpine invaders, turns out in more thoughtful representations to have been a prince of peculiarly mild demeanor, and apparently upright character.

NOTE 3. Page 14.

'*Eaten a dish of boiled hippopotamus:*' — We once thought that some error might exist in the text — *edisse* for *edidisse* — and that a man exposed a hippopotamus at the games of the amphitheatre; but we are now satisfied that he ate the hippopotamus.

NOTE 4. Page 17.

'*All had been forgotten.*' — It is true that the Augustan writer, rather than appear to know nothing at all, tells a most idle fable about a *scurra* having intruded into Cæsar's tent, and upon finding the young Emperor awake, had excited his comrades to the murder for fear of being punished for his insolent intrusion. But the whole story is nonsense; a camp legend, or at the best a fable put forth by the real conspirators to mask the truth. The writer did not believe it himself. By the way, a *scurra* does not retain its classical sense of a buffoon in the Augustan History; it means a σωματοφυλαξ, or body-guard; but why, is yet undiscovered. Our own belief is — that the word is a Thracian or a Gothic word; the body-guards being derived from those nations.

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THE ESSENES.

[1840.]

Some time ago, we published a little essay, that might easily be expanded into a very large volume; and ultimately into a perfectly new philosophy of Roman history, in proof that Rome was self-barbarized — barbarized *ab intra*, and not by foreign enemies. The evidences of this, 1st, in the death of her literature, and, 2d, in the instant oblivion which swallowed up all public transactions, are so obvious as to challenge notice from the most inattentive reader. For instance, as respects this latter tendency, what case can be more striking, than the fact that Trebellius Pollio, expressly dedicating himself to such researches, and having the state documents at his service, cannot trace, by so much as the merest outline, the biography of some great officers who had worn the purple as rebels, though actually personal friends of his own grandfather? So nearly connected as they were with his own age and his own family, yet had they utterly perished for want of literary memorials! A third indication of barbarism, in the growing brutality of the army and the Emperor, is of a nature to impress many readers even more powerfully, and especially by contrast with the spirit of Roman warfare in its republican

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period. Always it had been an insolent and haughty warfare; but, upon strong motives of policy, sparing in bloodshed. Whereas, latterly, the ideal of a Roman general was approaching continually nearer to the odious standard of a *caboceer* amongst the Ashantees. Listen to the father of his people (Gallienus) issuing his paternal commands for the massacre, in cold blood, of a whole district — not foreign but domestic — after the offence had become almost obsolete: 'Non satisfacies mihi, si tantum *armatos* occideris — quos et fors belli interimere potuisset. Perimendus est omnis sexus virilis:' and, lest even this sweeping warrant should seem liable to any merciful distinctions, he adds circumstantially — 'Si est senes atque impuberes sine meâ reprehensione occidi possent.' And thus the bloody mandate winds up: 'Occidendus est quicunque malè voluit, occidendus est quicunque malè dixit contra me: Lacera, occide, concide.' Was ever such a rabid tiger found, except amongst the Hyder Alis or Nadir Shahs of half-civilized or decivilized tribes? Yet another and a very favorite emperor outherods even this butcher, by boasting of the sabring which he had let loose amongst crowds of helpless women.

The fourth feature of the Roman barbarism upon which we insisted, viz., the growing passion for trivial anecdotage in slight of all nobler delineations, may be traced, in common with all the other features, to the decay of a *public mind* and a common *connecting interest*, amongst the different members of that vast imperial body. This was a necessity, arising out of the merely *personal* tenure by which the throne was held. Competition for dignities, ambition under any form, could

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not exist with safety under circumstances which immediately attracted a blighting jealousy from the highest quarter. Where hereditary succession was no fixed principle of state — no principle which all men were leagued to maintain — every man, in his own defence, might be made an object of anxiety in proportion to his public merit. Not conspiring, he might still be placed at the head of a conspiracy. There was no oath of allegiance taken to the emperor's family, but only to the emperor personally. But if it was thus dangerous for a man to offer himself as a participator in state honors; on the other hand, it was impossible for a people to feel any living sympathy with a public grandeur in which they could not safely attempt to participate. Simply to be a member of this vast body was no distinction at all: honor could not attach to what was universal. One path only lay open to personal distinction; and *that* being haunted along its whole extent by increasing danger, naturally bred the murderous spirit of retaliation or pre-occupation. It is besides certain, that the very change wrought in the nature of warlike rewards and honors, contributed to cherish a spirit of atrocity amongst the officers. Triumphs had been granted of old for conquests; and these were generally obtained much more by intellectual qualities than by any display of qualities merely or rudely martial. Triumphs were now forbidden fruit to any officer less than Augustan. And this one change, had there been no other, sufficed to throw the efforts of military men into a direction more humble, more directly personal and more brutal. It became dangerous to be too conspicuously victorious. There yet remains a letter, amongst the few surviving from

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that unlettered period, which whispers a thrilling caution to a great officer, not to be *too* meritorious: 'Dignus eras triumpho,' says the letter, 'si antiqua tempora extarent.' But what of that? What signified merit that was to cost a man his head? And the letter goes on to add this gloomy warning — 'Memor cujusdam ominis, *cautius velim vincas*.' The warning was thrown away; the man (Regillianus) persisted in these imprudent victories; he was too meritorious; he grew dangerous; and he perished. Such examples forced upon the officers a less suspicious and a more brutal ambition; the laurels of a conqueror marked a man out for a possible competitor, no matter through whose ambition — his own in assuming the purple, or that of others in throwing it by force around him. The differences of guilt could not be allowed for where they made no difference in the result. But the laurels of a butcher created no jealousy, whilst they sufficed for establishing a camp reputation. And thus the danger of a higher ambition threw a weight of encouragement into the lower and more brutal.

So powerful, indeed, was this tendency — so headlong this gravitation to the brutal — that unless a new force, moving in an opposite direction, had begun to rise in the political heavens, the Roman empire would have become an organized engine of barbarism — barbarous and making barbarous. This fact gives one additional motive to the study of Christian antiquities, which on so many other motives interest and perplex our curiosity. About the time of Dioclesian, the weight of Christianity was making itself felt in high places. There is a memorable scene between that emperor and a Pagan priest representing an oracle, (that is,

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speaking on behalf of the Pagan interests,) full forty years before the legal establishment of Christianity, which shows how insensibly the Christian faith had crept onwards within the fifty or sixty years previous. Such hints, such 'momenta,' such stages in the subtle progress of Christianity, should be carefully noted, searched, probed, improved. And it is partly because too little anxiety of research has been applied in this direction, that every student of ecclesiastical history mourns over the dire sterility of its primitive fields. For the first three or four centuries we know next to nothing of the course by which Christianity moved, and the events through which its agency was developed. *That* it prospered, we know; but *how* it prospered, (meaning not through what transcendent cause, but by what circumstantial steps and gradations,) is painfully mysterious. And for much of this darkness, we must confess that it is now past all human power of illumination. Nay, perhaps it belongs to the very sanctity of a struggle, in which powers more than human were working concurrently with man, that it should be lost, (like much of our earliest antediluvian history,) in a mysterious gloom; and for the same reason — viz., that when man stands too near the super-sensual world, and is too palpably co-agent with schemes of Providence, there would arise, upon the total review of the whole plan and execution, were it all circumstantially laid below our eyes, too compulsory an evidence of a supernatural agency. It is not meant that men should be *forced* into believing: free agencies must be left to the human belief, both in adopting and rejecting, else it would cease to be a *moral* thing, or to possess a moral value. Those who were contemporary to these

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great agencies, saw only in part; the fractionary mode of their perceptions intercepted this compulsion from *them*. But as to us who look back upon the whole, it would perhaps have been impossible to secure the same immunity from compulsion, the same integrity of the free, unbiased choice, unless by darkening the miraculous agencies, obliterating many facts, and disturbing their relations. In such a way the equality is maintained between generation and generation; no age is unduly favored, none penuriously depressed. Each has its separate advantages, each its peculiar difficulties. The worst has not so little light as to have a plea for infidelity. The best has not so much as to overpower the freedom of election — a freedom which is indispensable to all moral value, whether in doing or in suffering, in believing or denying.

Meantime, though this obscurity of primitive Christianity is past denying, and possibly, for the reason just given, not without an *à priori* purpose and meaning, we nevertheless maintain that something may yet be done to relieve it. We need not fear to press into the farthest recesses of Christian antiquity, under any notion that we are prying into forbidden secrets, or carrying a torch into shades consecrated to mystery. For wherever it is not meant that we should raise the veil, there we shall carry our torch in vain. Precisely as our researches are fortunate, they authenticate themselves as privileged: and in such a chase all success justifies itself.

No scholar — not even the wariest — has ever read with adequate care those records which we still possess, Greek or Latin, of primitive Christianity. He should approach this subject with a vexatious scrutiny.

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He should lie in ambush for discoveries, as we did in reading Josephus.

Let us examine his chapter on the Essenes, and open the very logic of the case, its very outermost outline, in these two sentences: — A thing there *is* in *Josephus*, which ought not to be there; this thing we will call *Epsilon*, (E.) A thing there is which ought to be in *Josephus*, but which is not; this thing we call *Chi*, (X.)

The *Epsilon*, which ought not to be there, but *is* — what is that? It is the pretended philosophical sect amongst the Jews, to which *Josephus* gives the name of *Essenes;* this ought not to be in *Josephus*, nor any where else, for certain we are that no such sect ever existed.

The *Chi*, which ought by every obligation — obligations of reason, passion, interest, common sense — to have been more broadly and emphatically present in the Judæan history of Josephus' period than in any other period whatever, but unaccountably is omitted — what is that? It is, reader, neither more nor less than the new-born brotherhood of *Christians*. The whole monstrosity of this omission will not be apparent to the reader, until his attention be pointed closely to the chronological position of Joseph — his longitude as respects the great meridian of the Christian era.

The period of Josephus' connection with Palestine, running abreast, (as it were,) with that very generation succeeding to Christ — with that very Epichristian age which dated from the crucifixion, and terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem — how, by what possibility, did he escape all knowledge of the Christians as a body of men that should naturally have chal-

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lenged notice from the very stocks and stones of their birthplace; the very echo of whose footsteps ought to have sunk upon the ear with the awe that belongs to spiritual phenomena? There were circumstances of distinction in the very closeness of the confederation that connected the early Christians, which ought to have made them interesting. But, waiving all that, what a supernatural awe must naturally have attended the persons of those who laid the corner-stone of their faith in an event so affecting and so appalling as the Resurrection! The *Chi*, therefore, that should be in *Josephus*, but is not, how can we suggest any approximation to a solution of this mystery — any clue towards it — any hint of a clue?

True it is, that an interpolated passage, found in all the printed editions of *Josephus*, makes him take a special and respectful notice of our Saviour. But this passage has long been given up as a forgery by all scholars. And in another essay on the Epichristian era, which we shall have occasion to write, some facts will be laid before the reader exposing a deeper folly in this forgery than is apparent at first sight.

True it is, that Whiston makes the astounding discovery that *Josephus* was himself an Ebionite Christian. Josephus a Christian! In the instance before us, were it possible that he had been a Christian, in that case the wonder is many times greater, that he should have omitted all notice of the whole body as a fraternity acting together with a harmony unprecedented amongst their distracted countrymen of that age; and, secondly, as a fraternity to whom was assigned a certain political aspect by their enemies. The civil and external relations of this new party he

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could not but have noticed, had he even omitted the religious doctrines which bound them together internally, as doctrines too remote from Roman comprehension. In reality, so far from being a Christian, we shall show that Josephus was not even a Jew, in any conscientious or religious sense. He had never taken the first step in the direction of Christianity; but was, as many other Jews were in that age, essentially a Pagan; as little impressed with the true nature of the God whom his country worshipped, with His ineffable purity and holiness, as any idolatrous Athenian whatsoever.

The wonder, therefore, subsists, and revolves upon us with the more violence, after Whiston's efforts to extinguish it — how it could have happened that a writer, who passed his infancy, youth, manhood, in the midst of a growing sect so transcendently interesting to every philosophic mind, and pre-eminently so interesting to a Jew, should have left behind him, in a compass of eight hundred and fifty-four pages, double columns, each column having sixty-five lines, (or a double ordinary octavo page,) much of it relating to his own times, not one paragraph, line, or fragment of a line, by which it can be known that he ever heard of such a body as the Christians.

And to our mind, for reasons which we shall presently show, it is equally wonderful that he *should* talk of the Essenes, under the idea of a known, stationary, original sect amongst the Jews, as that he should *not* talk of the Christians; equally wonderful that he should remember the imaginary as that he should forget the real. There is not one difficulty, but two difficulties; and what we need is, not one solution but two solutions.

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If, in an ancient palace, re-opened after it had been shut up for centuries, you were to find a hundred golden shafts or pillars, for which nobody could suggest a place or a use; and if, in some other quarter of the palace, far remote, you were afterwards to find a hundred golden sockets fixed in the floor — first of all, pillars which nobody could apply to any purpose, or refer to any place; secondly, sockets which nobody could fill; — probably even 'wicked Will Whiston' might be capable of a glimmering suspicion that the hundred golden shafts belonged to the hundred golden sockets. And if, upon applying the shafts to the sockets, it should turn out that each several shaft screwed into its own peculiar socket, why, in such a case, not 'Whiston, Ditton, & Co.' could resist the evidence, that each enigma had brought a key to the other; and that by means of two mysteries there had ceased even to be one mystery.

Now, then, first of all, before stating our objections to the Essenes as any permanent or known sect amongst the Jews, let us review as rapidly as possible the main features by which Joseph characterizes these supposed Essenes; and in a brief comment point out their conformity to what we know of the primitive Christians. That done, let us endeavor to explain all the remaining difficulties of the case. The words of *Josephus* we take from Whiston's translation; having in fact, at this moment, no other copy within reach. But we do this unwillingly: for Whiston was a poor Grecian; and, what is worse, he knew very little about English.

——'The *third* sect' (*i. e.* third in relation to the Pharisees, who are ranked as the *first*, and the Sad-

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ducees, who are ranked as the *second*) 'are called Essenes. These last are Jews by birth, and seem to have a greater affection for one another than the other sects have.'

We need not point out the strong conformity in this point to the distinguishing features of the new-born Christians, as they would be likely to impress the eye of a stranger. There was obviously a double reason for a stricter cohesion amongst the Christians internally, than could by possibility belong to any other sect — 1st, in the essential tendency of the whole Christian faith to a far more intense love than the world could comprehend, as well as in the express charge to love one another; 2dly, in the strong compressing power of external affliction, and of persecution too certainly anticipated. The little flock, turned out to face a wide world of storms, naturally drew close together. Over and above the indefeasible hostility of the world to a spiritual morality, there was the bigotry of Judaicial superstition on the one hand, and the bigotry of Paganism on the other. All this would move in mass against nascent Christianity, so soon as that moved; and well, therefore, might the instincts of the early Christians instruct them to act in the very closest concert and communion.

'These men are despisers of riches, and so very communicative, as raises our admiration. Nor is there any one to be found among them who hath more than another; every one's possessions are intermingled with every other's possessions, and so there is, as it were, one patrimony among all the brethren.'

In this account of the 'communicativeness,' as to temporal wealth, of the third sect, it is hardly neces-

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sary that we should point out the mirror which it holds up to the habits of the very first Christians in Jerusalem, as we see them recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. This, the primary record of Christian history, (for even the disciples were not in any full sense Christians until after the resurrection and the Divine afflatus,) is echoed afterwards in various stages of primitive Christianity. But all these subsequent acts and monuments of early Christian faith were derived by imitation and by sympathy from the Apostolic precedent in Jerusalem; as that again was derived from the 'common purse' carried by the Twelve Disciples.

'They have no certain city, but many of them dwell in every city; and if any of their sect come from other places, what they find lies open for them just as if it were their own: and they go in to such as they never knew before, as if they had been ever so long acquainted with them.'

All Christian antiquity illustrates and bears witness to this, as a regular and avowed Christian habit. To this habit points St. Paul's expression of '*given to hospitality;*' and many passages in all the apostolical writings. Like other practices, however, that had been firmly established from the beginning, it is rather alluded to, and indirectly taken for granted and assumed, than prescribed; expressly to teach or enjoin it was as little necessary, or indeed open to a teacher, as with us it would be open to recommend marriage. What Christian could be imagined capable of neglecting such an institution?

'For which reason they carry nothing with them when they travel into remote parts.'

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This dates itself from Christ's own directions, (St. Luke, x. 3, 4,) 'Go your way. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.' And, doubtless, many other of the primitive practices amongst the Christians were not adopted without a special command from Christ, traditionally retained by the Church whilst standing in the same civil circumstances, though not committed to writing amongst the great press of matter circumscribing the choice of the Evangelists.

'As for their piety towards God, it is very extraordinary: for before sun-rising they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers.'

This practice of antelucan worship, possibly having reference to the ineffable mystery of the resurrection, (all the Evangelists agreeing in the awful circumstance that it was very early in the morning, and one even saying, 'whilst it was yet dark,') a symbolic pathos which appeals to the very depths of human passion — as if the world of sleep and the anarchy of dreams figured to our apprehension the dark worlds of sin and death — it happens remarkably enough that we find confirmed and countersigned by the testimony of the first open antagonist to our Christian faith. Pliny, in that report to Trajan so universally known to every class of readers, and so rank with everlasting dishonor to his own sense and equity, notices this point in the ritual of primitive Christianity. 'However,' says he, 'they assured me that the amount of their fault, or of their error, was this, — that they were wont, on a stated day, to meet together *before it was light*, and to sing a hymn to Christ,' &c. The date of Pliny's letter is about forty years after the siege of

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Jerusalem; about seventy-seven, therefore, after the crucifixion, when Joseph would be just seventy-two years old. But we may be sure, from collateral records, and from the entire uniformity of early Christianity, that a much longer lapse of time would have made no change in this respect.

'They neglect wedlock; but they do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage.'

This is a very noticeable article in his account of the Essenes, and powerfully illustrates the sort of acquaintance which Josephus had gained with their faith and usages. In the first place, as to the doctrine itself, it tallies remarkably with the leanings of St. Paul. He allows of marriage, overruled by his own moral prudence. But evidently his bias was the other way. And the allowance is notoriously a concession to the necessities which experience had taught him, and by way of preventing greater evils: but an evil, on the whole, it is clear that he regarded it. And naturally it was so in relation to that highest mode of spiritual life which the apostles contemplated as a fixed ideal. Moreover, we know that the apostles fell into some errors which must have affected their views in these respects. For a time at least they thought the end of the world close at hand: who could think otherwise that had witnessed the awful thing which they had witnessed, or had drunk out of the same spiritual cup? Under such impressions, they reasonably pitched the key of Christian practice higher than else they would have done. So far as to the doctrine here ascribed to the Essenes. But it is observable, that in this place Josephus admits that these Essenes *did* tolerate marriage. Now, in his earlier notice of

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the same people, he had denied this. What do we infer from that? Why, that he came to his knowledge of the Essenes by degrees; and as would be likely to happen with regard to a sect sequestrating themselves, and locking up their doctrines as secrets: which description exactly applies to the earliest Christians. The instinct of self-preservation obliged them to retreat from notoriety. Their tenets could not be learned easily; they were gathered slowly, indirectly, by fragments. This accounts for the fact that people standing outside, like Josephus or Philo Judæus, got only casual glimpses of the truth, and such as were continually shifting. Hence at different periods Josephus contradicts himself. But if he had been speaking of a sect as notorious as the Pharisees or Sadducees, no such error, and no such alteration of views, could have happened.

'They are eminent for fidelity, and are the ministers of peace.'

We suppose that it cannot be necessary to remind any reader of such characteristic Christian doctrines as — 'Blessed are the peace-makers,' &c.; still less of the transcendent demand made by Christianity for singleness of heart, uprightness, and entire conscientiousness; without which all pretences to Christian truth are regarded as mere hollow mockeries. Here, therefore, again we read the features, too plainly for any mistake, of pure Christianity. But let the reader observe keenly, had there been this pretended sect of Essenes teaching all this lofty and spiritual morality, it would have been a fair inference to ask what more or better had been taught by Christ? in which case there might still have remained the great redemptional

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and mediatorial functions for Christ; but, as to his divine morality, it would have been forestalled. Such would have been the inference; and it is an inference which really *has been* drawn from this romance of the Essenes adopted as true history.

'Whatsoever they say is firmer than an oath; but swearing is avoided by them; and they esteem it worse than perjury.'

We presume that nobody can fail to recognise in this great scrupulosity the memorable command of Christ, delivered in such unexampled majesty of language, 'Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool,' &c. This was said in condemnation of a practice universal amongst the Jews; and if any man can believe that a visionary sect, of whom no man ever heard except through two writers, both lying under the same very natural mistake, could have come by blind accidents into such an inheritance of spiritual truth as is here described by Josephus, that man will find nothing beyond his credulity. For he presumes a revelation far beyond all the wisdom of the Pagan world to have been attained by some unknown Jewish philosopher, so little regarded by his followers that they have not even preserved his name from oblivion.

Amongst the initiatory and probationary vows which these sectarians are required to take, is this — 'That he will ever show fidelity to all men, and especially *to those in authority, because no one obtains the government without God's assistance.*' Here, again, we see a memorable precept of St. Paul and the apostles generally — the same precept, and built on the very same reason, viz. that rulers are of God's appointment.

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'They are long-lived also: insomuch, that many of them live above a hundred years, by means of the simplicity of their diet.'

Here we are reminded of St. John the Evangelist: whilst others, no doubt, would have attained the same age, had they not been cut off by martyrdom.

In many other points of their interior discipline, their white robes, their meals, their silence and gravity, we see in this account of the Essenes a mere echo of the primitive economy established among the first Christians, as we find it noticed up and down the apostolical constitutions.

It is remarkable that Josephus notices, as belonging to the sect of the Essenes, the order of 'angels' or messengers. Now, everybody must remember this order of officers as a Christian institution noticed in the Apocalypse.

Finally, in all that is said of the contempt which the Essenes showed for pain and death; and that 'although tortured and distorted, burnt and torn to pieces, yet could they not be made to flatter their tormentors, or to shed a tear, but that they smiled in their very torments,' &c., we see the regular habit of Christian martyrs through the first three centuries. We see that principle established amongst them so early as that first examination of Pliny's; for he is so well aware how useless it would be to seek for any discoveries by torture applied to the Christian *men*, that he resorts instantly to the torture of female servants. The secrecy, again, as to their opinions, is another point common to the supposed Essenes and the Christians. Why the Essenes, as an orthodox Jewish sect, should have practised any secrecy, Josephus would have found

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it hard to say; but the Christian reasons will appear decisive to any man who reflects.

But first of all, let us recur to the argument we have just employed, and summon you to a review of the New Testament. Christ, during his ministry in Palestine, is brought as if by special arrangement into contact with all known orders of men, — Scribes and Doctors, Pharisees and Sadducees, Herodians and followers of the Baptist, Roman officers, insolent with authority, tax-gatherers, the Pariahs of the land, Galileans, the most undervalued of the Jews, Samaritans, hostile to the very name of Jew, rich men clothed in purple, and poor men fishing for their daily bread, the happy and those that sate in darkness, wedding parties and funeral parties, solitudes amongst hills or seashores, and multitudes that could not be counted, mighty cities and hamlets the most obscure, golden sanhedrims, and the glorious temple, where he spoke to myriads of the worshippers, and solitary corners, where he stood in conference with a single contrite heart. Were the subject or the person different, one might ascribe a dramatic purpose and a scenical art to the vast variety of the circumstances and situations in which Christ is introduced. And yet, whilst all other sorts and orders of men converse with him, never do we hear of any interview between him and the Essenes. Suppose one Evangelist to have overlooked such a scene, another would not. In part, the very source of the dramatic variety in the New Testament scenes, must be looked for in the total want of collusion amongst the Evangelists. Each throwing himself back upon overmastering remembrances, all-glorified to his heart, had no more need to consult a

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fellow-witness, than a man needs, in rehearsing the circumstances of a final parting with a wife or a child, to seek collateral vouchers for his facts. Thence it was in part left to themselves, unmodified by each other, that they attained so much variety in the midst of so much inevitable sameness. One man was impressed by one case, a second by another. And thus, it must have happened amongst four, that at least one would have noticed the Essenes. But no one of the four gospels alludes to them. The Acts of the Apostles, again, whether by a fifth author or not, is a fifth body of remembrances, a fifth act of the memory applied to the followers of Christ. Yet neither does this notice them. The Apocalypse of St. John, reviewing the new church for a still longer period, and noticing all the great outstanding features of the state militant, then unrolling for Christianity, says not one word about them. St. Peter, St. James, utterly overlook them. Lastly, which weighs more than all the rest, St. Paul, the learned and philosophic apostle, bred up in all the learning of the most orthodox amongst the Jews, gives no sign that he had ever heard of such people. In short, to sum up all in one sentence, the very word *Essene* and *Essenes* is not found in the New Testament.

Now, is it for one moment to be credited — that a body of men so truly spiritual in the eternals of their creed, whatever might be the temporals of their practice, should have won no word of praise from Christ for that by which they so far exceeded other sects — no word of reproach for that by which they might happen to fall short of their own profession — no word of admonition, founded on the comparison between

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their good and their bad — their heavenly and earthly? Or, if that had been supposable, can we believe that Christ's enemies, so eager as they showed themselves to turn even the Baptist into a handle of reproach against the new teacher, would have lost the overwhelming argument derived from the Essenes? 'A new command I give unto you.' 'Not at all,' they would have retorted — 'Not at all new. Everything spiritual in your ethics has been anticipated by the Essenes.' It would have been alleged, that the function of Redeemer for Israel was to be judged and tried by the event. The only *instant* touchstone for the pretensions of Christ lay in the divine character of his morality, and the spirituality of that worship which he taught. Miracles were or were not from God, according to purposes to which they ministered. That moral doctrine and that worship were those purposes. By these only they could try the soundness of all beside; and if these had been forestalled by the Essenes, what remained for any new teacher or new founder of a religion? In fact, were the palpable lies of this Jew-traitor built on anything but delusions misinterpreted by his own ignorant heart, there would be more in that one tale of his about the Essenes to undermine Christianity, than in all the batteries of all the infidels to overthrow it. No infidel can argue away the spirituality of the Christian religion: attacks upon miracles leave *that* unaffected. But he, who (confessing the spirituality) derives it from some elder and unknown source, at one step evades what he could not master. He overthrows without opposition, and enters the citadel through ruins caused by internal explosion.

What then is to be thought? If this deathlike

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silence of all the evangelists, and all the apostles, makes it a mere impossibility to suppose the existence of such a sect as the Essenes in the time of Christ, did such a sect arise afterwards, viz. in the Epichristian generation? Or, if not, how and by what steps came up the romance we have been considering? Was there any substance in the tale? Or, if positively none, how came the fiction? Was it a conscious lie? Was it a mistake? Was it an exaggeration?

Now, our idea is as follows: — What do we suppose the early Christians to have been called? By what name were they known amongst themselves and amongst others? *Christians?* Not at all. When it is said — 'The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch,' we are satisfied that the meaning is not — this name, now general, was first used at Antioch; but that, whereas we followers of Christ generally call one another, and *are* called by a particular name X, in Antioch, that name was not used; but from the very beginning they were called by another name, viz., Christians. At all events, since this name Christian was confessedly used at Antioch before it was used anywhere else, there must have been another name elsewhere for the same people. What *was* that name? It was '*The Brethren*,' [οἱ ἀδελφοι;] and at times, by way of variety, to prevent the awkwardness of too monotonously repeating the same word, perhaps it was '*The Faithful*,' [οἱ πιστοι.] The name *Christians* travelled, we are convinced, not immediately amongst themselves, but slowly amongst their enemies. It was a name of reproach; and the meaning was — 'We Pagans are all worshippers of gods, such as they are; but this sect worships a man, and that man a male-

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factor.' For, though Christ should properly have been known by his name, which was Jesus, yet, because his crime, in the opinion of the Jews, lay in the office he had assumed — in having made himself the *Christos*, the anointed of God, therefore it happened that he was published amongst the Roman world by that name: his offence, his '*titulus*' on the cross, (the king, or the anointed,) was made his Roman name. Accordingly Tacitus, speaking of some insurgents in Judea, says — 'that they mutinied under the excitement of Christ, (not Jesus,) their original ringleader,' (*impulsore Chresto.*) And no doubt it had become a scoffing name, until the Christians disarmed the scoff of its sting by assuming it themselves; as was done in the case of 'the Beggars' in the Netherlands, and 'the Methodists' in England.

Well: meantime, what name did the Christians bear in their very birthplace? Were they called 'The Brethren' there? No. And why not? Simply because it had become too dangerous a name. To be bold, to affront all reasonable danger, was their instinct and their duty; but not to tempt utter extinction or utter reduction to imbecility. We read amiss, if we imagine that the fiery persecution, which raged against Christ, had burned itself out in the act of the crucifixion. It slept, indeed, for a brief interval: but that was from necessity; for the small flock of scattered sheep easily secreted themselves. No sooner did they multiply a little, no sooner did their meetings again proclaim their 'whereabouts,' than the snake found them out, again raised its spiry crest amongst them, and again crushed them for a time. The martyrdom of St. Stephen showed that no jesting was intended

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It was determined that examples should be made. It was resolved that this revolt against the Temple (the Law and the Prophets) must be put down. The next event quickened this agency sevenfold. A great servant of the persecution, in the very agony of the storm which he was himself guiding and pointing, working the very artillery of Jerusalem upon some scent which his bloodhounds had found in Syria, suddenly, in one hour passed over to the enemy. What of that? Did that startle the persecution? Probably it did: failure from within was what they had not looked for. But the fear which it bred was sister to the wrath of hell. The snake turned round; but not for flight. It turned to fasten upon the revolter. St. Paul's authority as a leader in the Jewish councils availed him nothing after this. Orders were undoubtedly expedited from Jerusalem to Damascus, as soon as messengers could be interchanged, for his assassination. And assassinated he would have been, had he been twenty St. Pauls, but for his secret evasion, and his flight to Arabia. Idumea, probably a sort of Ireland to Judea, was the country to which he fled; where again he might have been found out, but his capture would have cost a negotiation; and in all likelihood he lay unknown amongst crowds. Nor did he venture to show his face again in Jerusalem for some years; and then again not till a term of fourteen years, half a generation, during which many of the burning zealots, and of those who could have challenged him personally as the great apostate, must have gone to their last sleep.

During the whole of this novitiate for Christianity, and in fact throughout the whole Epichristian era, there

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was a brooding danger over the name and prospects of Christianity. To hold up a hand, to put forth a head, in the blinding storm, was to perish. It was to solicit and tempt destruction. That could not be right. Those who were answerable for the great interest confided to them, if in their own persons they might have braved the anger of the times, were not at liberty to do so on this account — that it would have stopped effectually the expansion of the Church. Martyrdom and persecution formed the atmosphere in which it throve; but not the frost of death. What, then, did the fathers of the Church do? You read that, during a part of this Epichristian age, 'the churches had peace.' True, they had so. But do you know how they had it? Do you guess what they did?

It was this: They said to each other — If we are to stand such consuming fires as we have seen, one year will finish us all. And then what will become of the succession that we are to leave behind us? We must hide ourselves effectually. And this can be done only by symbolizing. Any lesser disguise our persecutors will penetrate. But this, by its very nature, will baffle them, and yet provide fully for the nursing of an infant Church. They proceeded, therefore, thus: 'Let there be darkness' — was the first word of command: 'let us muffle ourselves in thick clouds, which no human eye can penetrate. And towards this purpose let us immediately take a symbolic name. And, because any name that expresses or implies a secret fraternity — a fraternity bound together by any hidden tie or purpose — will instantly be challenged for the Christian brotherhood under a new masque, instantly the bloody Sanhedrim will get to their old practices — torturing

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our weaker members, (as afterwards the cruel Pliny selected for torture the poor frail women-servants of the brethren,) and the wolf will be raging amongst our folds in three months, — therefore two things are requisite; one, that this name which we assume should be such as to disarm suspicion, [in this they acted upon the instinct of those birds, which artfully construct signs and appearances to draw away the fowler from their young ones;] the other, that in case, after all, some suspicion should arise, and the enemy again break in, there must be three or four barriers to storm before he can get to the stronghold in the centre.'

Upon this principle all was arranged. First, for the name that was to disarm suspicion — what name could do that? Why, what *was* the suspicion? A suspicion that Christian embers were sleeping under the ashes. True: but why was that suspicious? Why had it ever been suspicious? For two reasons: because the Christian faith was supposed to carry a secret hostility to the Temple and its whole ritual economy; secondly, for an earnest political reason, because it was believed to tend, by mere necessity, to such tumults or revolutions as would furnish the Roman, on tiptoe for this excuse, with a plea for taking away the Jewish name and nation; that is, for taking away their Jewish *autonomy*, (or administration by their own Mosaic code,) which they still had, though otherwise in a state of dependency. Well now, for this sort of suspicion, no name could be so admirably fitted as one drawn from the very ritual service of that very Temple which was supposed to be in danger. That Temple *was* in danger: the rocks on which it stood were

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already quaking beneath it. All was acomplished. Its doom had gone forth. Shadows of the coming fate were spreading thick before it. Its defenders had a dim misgiving of the storm that was gathering. But they mistook utterly the quarter from which it was to come. And they closed the great gates against an enemy that entered by the postern. However, they could not apprehend a foe in a society that professed a special interest in Israel. The name chosen, therefore, was derived from the very costume of the Jewish High Priest, the pontifical ruler of the Temple. This great officer wore upon his breast a splendid piece of jewelry; twelve precious stones were inserted in the breast-plate, representing the twelve sons of Jacob, or twelve tribes[1] of Israel: *and this was called the Essen.* Consequently to announce themselves as *the Society of the Essen*, was to express a peculiar solicitude for the children of Israel. Under this masque nobody could suspect any hostility to Jerusalem or its temple; nobody, therefore, under the existing misconception of Christian objects and the Christian character, could suspect a Christian society.

But was not this hypocritical disguise? Not at all. A profession was thus made of paramount regard to Judea and her children. Why not? Christians everywhere turned with love, and yearning, and thankfulness, the profoundest, to that 'Holy City,' (so called by Christ himself,) which had kept alive for a thousand years the sole vestiges of pure faith, and which, for a far longer term mystically represented that people which had known the true God, 'when all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones.' Christians, or they would have been no Christians, everywhere prayed for her peace.

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And if the downfall of Jerusalem was connected with the rise of Christianity, that was not through any enmity borne to Jerusalem by Christians, (as the Jews falsely imagine;) but because it was not suitable for the majesty of God, as the father of truth, to keep up a separation amongst the nations when the fulness of time in His counsels required that all separation should be at an end. At His bidding the Temple had been raised. At His bidding the Temple must be destroyed. Nothing could have saved it but becoming Christian. The end was accomplished for which it had existed; a great river had been kept pure; that was now to expand into an ocean.

But, as to any hypocrisy in the fathers of this indispensable scheme for keeping alive the fire that burned on the altar of Christianity, that was impossible. So far from needing to assume more love for Judaism than they had, we know that their very infirmity was to have by much too sectarian and exclusive a regard for those who were represented by the Temple. The Bible, which conceals nothing of any men's errors, does not conceal that. And we know that all the weight of the great intellectual apostle was necessary to overrule the errors, in this point, of St. Peter. The fervid apostle erred; and St. Paul 'withstood him to his face.' But his very error proves the more certainly his sincerity and singleness of heart in setting up a society that should profess in its name the service of Jerusalem and her children as its primary function. The name *Essen* and *Essenes* was sent before to disarm suspicion, and as a pledge of loyal fidelity.

Next, however, this society was to be a secret society — an Eleusinian society — a Freemason society.

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For, if it were not, how was it to provide for the culture of Christianity? Now, if the reader pauses a moment to review the condition of Palestine and the neighboring countries at that time, he will begin to see the opening there was for such a society. The condition of the times was agitated and tumultuous beyond anything witnessed amongst men, except at the Reformation and the French Revolution. The flame on the Pagan altars was growing pale, the oracles over the earth were muttering their alarm, panic terrors were falling upon nations, murmurs were arising, whispers circulating from nobody knew whence — that out of the East, about this time, should arise some great and mysterious deliverer. This whisper had spread to Rome — was current everywhere. It was one of those awful whispers that have no author. Nobody could ever trace it. Nobody could ever guess by what path it had travelled. But observe, in that generation, at Rome and all parts of the Mediterranean to the west of Palestine, the word 'Oriens' had a technical and limited meaning; it was restricted to Syria, of which Palestine formed a section. This use of the word will explain itself to anybody who looks at a map of the Mediterranean as seen from Italy. But some years after the Epichristian generation, the word began to extend; and very naturally, as the Roman armies began to make permanent conquests nearer to the Euphrates. Under these remarkable circumstances, and agitated beyond measure between the oppression of the Roman armies on the one hand and the consciousness of a peculiar dependence on God on the other, all thoughtful Jews were disturbed in mind. The more conscientious, the more they were agi-

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tated. Was it their duty to resist the Romans? God could deliver them, doubtless; but God worked oftentimes by human means. Was it His pleasure that they should resist by arms? Others again replied — if you do, then you prepare an excuse for the Romans to extirpate your nation. Many, again, turned more to religious hopes: these were they who, in scriptural anguage, 'waited for the consolation of Israel:' that s, they trusted in that Messiah who had been promised, and they yearned for his manifestation. They mourned over Judea; they felt that she had rebelled; but she had been afflicted, and perhaps her trangressions might now be blotted out, and her glory might now be approaching. Of this class was he who took Christ in his arms when an infant in the temple. Of this class were the two rich men, Joseph and Nicodemus, who united to bury him. But even of this class many there were who took different views of the functions properly belonging to the Messiah; and many that, either through this difference of original views, or from imperfect acquaintance with the life of Jesus, doubted whether he were indeed the promised Messiah. Even John the Baptist doubted that, and his question upon that point, addressed to Christ himself, 'Art thou he who should come, or do we look for another?' has been generally fancied singularly at war with his own earlier testimony, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!' But it is not. The offices of mysterious change for Israel were prophetically announced as coming through a series and succession of characters — Elias, 'that prophet,' and the Messiah. The succession might even be more divided. And the Baptist, who did not know

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himself to be Elias, might reasonably be in doubt (and *at a time when his career was only beginning*) whether Jesus were the Messiah.

Now, out of these mixed elements — men in every stage and gradation of belief or spiritual knowledge, but all musing, pondering, fermenting in their minds — all tempest-shaken, sorrow-haunted, perplexed, hoping, seeking, doubting, trusting — the apostles would see abundant means for peopling the lower or initiatory ranks of their new society. Such a craving for light from above probably never existed. The land was on the brink of convulsions, and all men felt it. Even amongst the rulers in Jerusalem had been some who saw the truth of Christ's mission, though selfish terrors had kept back their testimony. From every rank and order of men, would press in the meditative to a society where they would all receive sympathy, whatever might be their views, and many would receive light.

This society — how was it constituted? In the innermost class were placed, no doubt, all those, and those only, who were thoroughly Christians. The danger was from Christianity. And this danger was made operative only, by associating with the mature and perfect Christian any false brother, any half-Christian, any hypocritical Christian, any wavering Christian. To meet this danger, there must be a winnowing and a sifting of all candidates. And because the danger was awful, involving not one but many, not a human interest but a heavenly interest; therefore these winnowings and siftings must be many, must be repeated, must be soul-searching. Nay, even that will not suffice. Oaths, pledges to God as well as to man,

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must be exacted. All this the apostles did: serpents by experience, in the midst of their dove-like faith, they acted as wise stewards for God. They surrounded their own central consistory with lines impassable to treachery. Josephus, the blind Jew — blind in heart, we mean, and understanding, reporting a matter of which he had no comprehension, nor could have — (for we could show to demonstration that, for a specific reason, he could not have belonged to the society) — even this man, in his utter darkness, telegraphs to us by many signals, rockets thrown up by the apostles, which come round and are visible to us, but unseen by him, what it is that the apostles were about. He tells us expressly, that a preparatory or trial period of two years was exacted of every candidate before his admission to *any* order; that, after this probationary attendance is finished, 'they are parted into four classes;' and these classes, he tells us, are so severely separated from all intercommunion, that merely to have touched each other was a pollution that required a solemn purification. Finally, as if all this were nothing, though otherwise disallowing of oaths, yet in this, as in a service of God, oaths, which Josephus styles 'tremendous,' are exacted of each member, that he will reveal nothing of what he learns.

Who can fail to see, in these multiplied precautions for guarding, what according to Josephus is no secret at all, nor anything approaching to a secret, that here we have a central Christian society, secret from necessity, cautious to excess from the extremity of the danger, and surrounding themselves in their outer rings by merely Jewish disciples, but those whose state of mind

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promised a hopeful soil for the solemn and affecting discoveries which awaited them in the higher states of their progress? Here is the true solution of this mysterious society, the Essenes, never mentioned in any one record of the Christian generation, and that because it first took its rise in the necessities of the Epichristian generation. There is more by a good deal to say of these Essenes; but this is enough for the present. And if any man asks how they came to be traced to so fabulous an antiquity, the account now given easily explains that. Three authors only mention them — Pliny, Philo-Judæus and Josephus. Pliny builds upon these two last, and other Jewish romancers. The two last may be considered as contemporaries. And all that they allege, as to the antiquity of the sect, flows naturally from the condition and circumstances of the outermost circle in the series of the classes. They were occupied exclusively with Judaism. And Judaism had, in fact, as we all know, that real antiquity in its people, and its rites, and its symbols, which these then *uninitiated* authors understand and fancy to have been meant of the *Essenes* as a philosophical sect.

PART II.

We have sketched rapidly, in the first part of our essay, some outline of a theory with regard to the Essenes, confining ourselves to such hints as are suggested by the accounts of this sect in Josephus. And we presume that most readers will go along with us so far as to acknowledge some shock, some pause given

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to that blind acquiescence in the Bible statement which had hitherto satisfied them. By the Bible statement we mean, of course, nothing which any inspired part of the Bible tells us — on the contrary, one capital reason for rejecting the old notions is, the total silence of the Bible; but we mean that little explanatory note on the Essenes, which our Bible translators under James I. have thought fit to adopt, and in reality to adopt from Josephus, with reliance on his authority which closer study would have shown to be unwarranted. We do not wonder that Josephus has been misappreciated by Christian readers. It is painful to read any author in a spirit of suspicion; most of all, that author to whom we must often look as our only guide. Upon Josephus we are compelled to rely for the most affecting section of ancient history. Merely as a scene of human passion, the main portion of his *Wars* transcends, in its theme, all other histories But considered also as the agony of a mother church, out of whose ashes arose, like a phœnix, that filial faith 'which passeth all understanding,' the last conflict of Jerusalem and her glorious temple exacts from the devotional conscience as much interest as would otherwise be yielded by our human sympathies. For the circumstances of this struggle we must look to Josephus: him or none we must accept for witness. And in such a case, how painful to suppose a hostile heart in every word of his deposition! Who could bear to take the account of a dear friend's last hours and farewell words from one who confessedly hated him? — one word melting us to tears, and the next rousing us to the duty of jealousy and distrust! Hence we do not wonder at the pious fraud which interpolated the well-

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known passage about our Saviour. Let us read any author in those circumstances of time, place, or immediate succession to the cardinal events of our own religion, and we shall find it a mere postulate of the heart, a mere necessity of human feeling, that we should think of him as a Christian; or, if not absolutely that, as every way disposed to be a Christian, and falling short of that perfect light only by such clouds as his hurried life or his personal conflicts might interpose. We do not blame, far from it — we admire those who find it necessary (even at the cost of a little self-delusion) to place themselves in a state of charity with an author treating such subjects, and in whose company they were to travel through some thousands of pages. We also find it painful to read an author and to loathe him. We, too, would be glad to suppose, as a possibility about Josephus, what many adopt as a certainty. But we know too much. Unfortunately, we have read Josephus with too scrutinizing (and, what is more, with too combining) an eye. We know him to be an unprincipled man, and an ignoble man; one whose adhesion to Christianity would have done no honor to our faith — one who most assuredly was not a Christian — one who was not even in any tolerable sense a Jew — one who was an enemy to *our* faith, a traitor to his own: as an enemy, vicious and ignorant; as a traitor, steeped to the lips in superfluous baseness.

The vigilance with which we have read Josephus, has (amongst many other hints) suggested some with regard to the Essenes: and to these we shall now make our own readers a party; after stopping to say, that thus far, so far as we have gone already, we count

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on their assent to our theory, were it only from those considerations: First, the exceeding improbability that a known philosophic sect amongst the Jews, chiefly distinguished from the other two by its *moral* aspects, could have lurked unknown to the Evangelists; Secondly, the exceeding improbability that such a sect, laying the chief burden of its scrupulosity in the matter of oaths, should have bound its members by 'tremendous' oaths of secrecy in a case where there was nothing to conceal; Thirdly, the staring contradictoriness between such an avowal on the part of Josephus, and his deliberate revelation of what he fancied to be their creed. The objection is too inevitable: either you have taken the oaths or you have not. You *have?* Then by your own showing you are a perjured traitor. You have *not?* Then you confess yourself to speak from no personal knowledge. How can you know anything of their *secret* doctrines? The seal is wanting to the record.

However, it is possible that some people will evade this last dilemma, by suggesting — that Josephus wrote for Roman readers — for strangers — and for strangers after any of his countrymen who might be interested in the secret, had perished; if not personally perished, at least as a body politic. The last vestiges of the theoretical government had foundered with Jerusalem; and it might be thought by a better man than Josephus, that all obligations of secrecy had perished in the general wreck.

We need not dispute that point. There is enough in what remains. The positive points of contact between the supposed Essenes and the Christians are too many to be got over. But upon these we will not at

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present insist. In this place we confine ourselves to the two points: 1. Of the universal silence amongst Christian writers, who, of all parties, would have felt it most essential to notice the Essenes, had there existed such a sect antecedently to Christ: and, 2. Of the absurdity involved in exacting an inexorable concealment from those who had nothing to reveal.

But then recollect, reader, precisely the Christian truths which stood behind the *exoteric* doctrines of the Essenes, were the truths hidden from Josephus. Reason enough there was for concealment, IF the Essenes were Christians; and reason more than was ever known to Josephus. But then, this reason for concealment in the Essenes could be known only to him who was aware that they had something to conceal. He who saw only the masque, supposing it to be the true face, ought to have regarded the mystifying arrangements as perfect mummery. He that saw the countenance behind the masque — a countenance sweet as Paradise, but fearful as the grave at that particular time in Jerusalem, would never ask again for the motives to this concealment. Those he would apprehend in a moment. But as to Josephus, who never *had* looked behind the masque, the order for concealment, the adjurations to concealment, the vows of concealment, the adamantine walls of separation between the different orders of the fraternity, in order to ensure concealment, ought to have been, must have been regarded by him, as the very hyperbole of childishness.

Partly because Josephus was in this state of darkness, partly from personal causes, has he failed to clear up the secret history of Judea, in her final, that is, her Epichristian generation. The evidences of his having

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failed are two, — 1st, the absolute fact, as existing in his works; which present us with a mere anarchy of incidents, as regards the politics of his own times, under no law of cohesion whatsoever, or of intelligible derivation; 2dly, the *à priori* necessity that he *should* fail; a necessity laid in the very situation of Josephus — as a man of servile temper placed amongst elements that required a Maccabee, and as a man without principle, who could not act so that his actions would bear to be reported without disguise, and as one in whom no confidence was likely to be lodged by the managers of great interests, or the depositories of great secrets.

This view of things summons us to pause, and to turn aside from our general inquiry into a special one as to Josephus. Hitherto we have derived our arguments on the Essenes from Josephus, as a *willing* witness — a volunteer even. But now we are going to extort our arguments; to torture him, to put him on the rack, to force him into confession; and upon points which he has done his best to darken, by throwing dust in the eyes of us all. Why? — because hand-in-hand with the truth must go the exposure of himself. Josephus stands right in the very doorway of the light, purposely obscuring it. A glare comes round by side snatches; oblique rays, stray gleams, from the truth which he so anxiously screens. But before the real state of things can be guessed at, it is necessary to destroy this man's character.

Now, let us try to appreciate the exact position and reasonable credibility of Josephus, as he stands at present, midway between us a distant posterity, and his own countrymen of his own times, sole interpreter, sole surviving reporter, having all things his own way,

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nobody to contradict him, nobody to taint his evidence with suspicion. His case is most remarkable; and yet, though remarkable, is not so rare but that many times it must have occurred in private (sometimes in public) life. It is the case of a solitary individual surviving out of a multitude embarked in a desperate enterprise — some playing one part, (a part, suppose, sublime and heroic,) some playing another, (base, treacherous, fiendish.) Suddenly a great convulsion involves all in one common ruin, this man only excepted. He now finds himself with a *carte blanche* before him, on which he may inscribe whatever romance in behalf of himself he thinks proper. The whole field of action is open to him — the whole field of motives. He may take what side he will. And be assured that, whatever part in the play he assumes, he will give himself the best of characters. For courage you will find him a Maccabee. His too tender heart interfered, or he could have signalized his valor even more emphatically. And, descending to such base things as treasures of money, jewels, land, &c., the chief part of what had been captured, was of course (strictly speaking) his own property. What impudent falsehood, indeed, may such a man *not* bring forward, when there is nobody to confront him?

But *was* there nobody? Reader, absolutely nobody. Prisoners captured with himself at Jotopata there were none — not a man. That fact, indeed — the inexorable fact, that he only endured to surrender — that one fact, taken with the commentary which we could furnish as to the circumstances of the case, and the Jewish casuistry under those circumstances, is one of the many damning features of his tale. But was there

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nobody, amongst the ninety thousand prisoners taken at Jerusalem, who could have spoken to parts of this man's public life? Doubtless there were; but to what purpose for people in their situation to come forward? One and all, positively without a solitary exception, they were themselves captives, slaves condemned, despairing. Ten thousand being selected for the butcheries of the Syrian amphitheatres, the rest were liable to some punishment equally terrific; multitudes were perishing of hunger; under the mildest award, they were sure of being sentenced to the stone quarries of Egypt. Wherefore, in this extremity of personal misery and of desperate prospects, should any man find himself at leisure for a vengeance on one happier countryman which could bring no profit to the rest? Still, in a case so questionable as that of Josephus, it is possible enough that Titus would have sought some further light amongst the prisoners under any ordinary circumstances. In his heart, the noble Roman must have distrusted Josephus and his vainglorious account of himself. There were circumstances outstanding, many and strong, that must have pointed his suspicions in that direction; and the very conversation of a villain is sure to entangle him in contradictions. But it was now too late to move upon that inquest. Josephus himself acknowledges, that Vespasian was shrewd enough from the first to suspect him for the sycophantish knave that he was. But that time had gone by. And, in the interval, Josephus had used his opportunities skilfully; he had performed that particular service for the Flavian family, which was the one *desideratum* they sought for and yearned for. By his pretended dreams, Josephus had put that seal

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of heavenly ratification to the ambitious projects of Vespasian, which only was wanting for the satisfaction of his soldiers. The service was critical. What Titus said to his father is known: — This man, be he what he may, has done a service to *us*. It is not for men of rank like us to haggle and chaffer about rewards. Having received a favor, we must make the reward princely; not what he deserves to receive, but what is becoming for us to grant. On this consideration these great men acted. Sensible that, not having hanged Josephus at first, it was now become their duty to reward him, they did not do the thing by halves. Not content with releasing him from his chains, they sent an officer to cut his chains to pieces — that being a symbolic act by which the Romans abolished the very memory and legal record that ever a man had been in confinement. The fact is, that amongst the Roman public virtues in that age, was an intense fidelity to engagements; and where they had even tacitly permitted a man to form hopes, they fulfilled them beyond the letter. But what Titus said to his staff, though naturally not put on record by Josephus, was very probably this: — 'Gentlemen, I see you look upon this Jew as a poltroon, and perhaps worse. Well, possibly we don't much differ upon that point. But it has become necessary to the public service that this man should be reinstated in credit. He will now, perhaps, turn over a new leaf. If he does not, kick him to Hades. But, meantime, give the man a trial.'

Such, there can be little doubt, was the opinion of Cæsar about this man. But now it remains to give our own, with the reasons on which it rests.

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I. — First of all — which we bring merely as a proof of his habitual mendacity — in one of those tongue-doughty orations, which he represents himself as having addressed to the men of Jerusalem, they standing on the walls patiently, with paving-stones in their hands, to hear a renegade abuse them by the hour, [such is his lying legend,] Josephus roundly asserts that Abraham, the patriarch of their nation, had an army of three hundred and sixty thousand troops, that is, somewhere about seventy-five legions — an establishment beyond what the first Cæsars had found requisite for mastering the Mediterranean sea with all the nations that belted it — that is, a ring-fence of five thousand miles by seven hundred on an average. Now, this is in the style of the Baron Munchausen. But it is worthy of a special notice, for two illustrations which it offers of this renegade's propensities. One is the abject homage with which he courted the Roman notice. Of this lie, as of all his lies, the primary purpose is, to fix the gaze and to court the admiration of the Romans. Judea, Jerusalem — these were objects never in his thoughts; it was Rome, the haven of his apostasy, on which his anxieties settled. Now, it is a judgment upon the man who carried these purposes in his heart — it is a judicial retribution — that precisely this very lie, shaped and pointed to conciliate the Roman taste for martial splendor, was probably the very ground of that disgust which seems to have alienated Tacitus from his works. Apparently Josephus should have been the foremost authority with this historian for Jewish affairs. But enough remains to show that he was not; and it is clear that the confidence of so sceptical a writer must

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have been shaken from the very first by so extravagant a tale. Abraham, a mere stranger and colonist in Syria, whose descendants in the third generation mustered only seventy persons in emigrating to Egypt, is here placed at the head of a force greater than great empires had commanded or had needed. And from what resources raised? From a little section of Syria, which (supposing it even the personal domain of Abraham) could not be equal to Wales. And for what objects? To face what enemies? A handful of robbers that might congregate in the desert. Such insufferable fairy tales must have vitiated the credit even of his rational statements; and it is thus pleasant to see the apostate missing one reward which he courted, purely through his own eagerness to buy it at the price of truth. But a second feature which this story betrays in the mind of Josephus, is the thorough defect of Hebrew sublimity and scriptural simplicity which mark his entire writing. How much more impressive is the picture of Abraham, as the father of the faithful, the selected servant and feudatory of God, sitting in the wilderness, majestically reposing at the door of his tent, surrounded by a little camp of servants and kinsmen, a few score of camels and a few herds of cattle, than in the melodramatic attitude of a general, belted and plumed, with a glittering staff of officers at his orders? But the mind of Josephus, always irreligious, was now violently warped into a poor imitation of Roman models. He absolutely talks of '*liberty*' and '*glory*,' as the moving impulses of Hebrew saints; and does his best to translate the Maccabees, and many an elder soldier of the Jewish faith, into poor theatrical mimics of Spartans and

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Thebans. This depravity of taste, and abjuration of his national characteristics, must not be overlooked in estimating the value whether of his opinions or his statements. We have evidence superabundant to these two features in the character of Josephus — that he would distort everything in order to meet the Roman taste, and that he had originally no sympathy whatsoever with the peculiar grandeur of his own country.

II.—It is a remarkable fact, that Josephus never speaks of Jerusalem and those who conducted its resistance, but in words of abhorrence and of loathing that amounts to frenzy. Now in what point did they differ from himself? Change the name Judea to Galilee, and the name Jerusalem to Jotopata, and their case was his; and the single difference was — that the men, whom he reviles as often as he mentions them, had persevered to martyrdom, whilst he — he only — had snatched at life under any condition of ignominy. But precisely in that difference lay the ground of his hatred. He could not forgive those whose glorious resistance (glorious, were it even in a mistaken cause) emblazoned and threw into relief his own apostasy. This we cannot dwell on; but we revert to the question — What had the people of Jerusalem done, which Josephus had not attempted to do?

III. — Whiston, another Caliban worshipping another Trinculo, finds out a divinity in Josephus, because, on being brought prisoner to Vespasian, he pretended to have seen in a dream that the Roman general would be raised to the purple. Now,

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1. When we see Cyrus lurking in the prophecies of Isaiah, and Alexander in those of Daniel, we apprehend a reasonableness in thus causing the spirit of prophecy to settle upon those who were destined to move in the great cardinal revolutions of this earth. But why, amongst all the Cæsars, must Vespasian, in particular, be the subject of a prophecy, and a prophecy the most thrilling, from the mysterious circumstances which surrounded it, and from the silence with which it stole into the mouths of all nations? The reigns of all the three Flavian Cæsars, Vespasian, with his sons Titus and Domitian, were memorable for nothing: with the sole exception of the great revolution in Judea, none of them were marked by any great event; and all the three reigns combined filled no important space of time.

2. If Vespasian, for any incomprehensible reason, were thought worthy of being heralded by a prophecy, what logic was there in connecting him with Syria? That which raised him to the purple, that which suggested him to men's minds, was his military eminence, and this was obtained in Britain.

3. If the mere local situations from which any uninteresting emperor happened to step on to the throne, merited this special glorification from prophecy, why was not many another region, town, or village, illustrated in the same way? That Thracian hamlet, from which the Emperor Maximin arose, had been pointed out to notice *before the event* as a place likely to be distinguished by some great event. And yet, because this prediction had merely a personal reference, and no relation at all to any great human interest, it was treated with little respect, and never crept into a gen-

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eral circulation. So of this prophecy with respect to one who should rise out of the East, and should ultimately stretch his sceptre over the whole world, (*rerum potiretur*,) if Josephus is allowed to ruin it by his sycophancy, instantly, from the rank of a Hebrew prophecy — a vision seen by 'the man whose eyes God had opened' — it sinks to the level of a vagrant gipsy's gossip. What! shall Rome combine with Jerusalem? — for we find this same mysterious prediction almost verbally the same in Suetonius and in Tacitus, no less than in the Jewish prophets. Shall it stretch not only from the east to the west in point of space, but through the best part of a thousand years in point of time, all for the sake of preparing one day's adulatory *nuzzur*, by which a trembling Jew may make his propitiation to an intriguing lieutenant of Cæsar? And how came it that Whiston (who, to do him justice, was too pious to have abetted an infidel trick, had his silliness suffered him to have seen through it) failed to perceive this consequence? If the prophecy before us belong to Vespasian, then does it *not* belong to Christ. And in that case, the worst error of the Herodian Jews, who made the Messiah prophecies terminate in Herod, is ratified by Christians; for between Herod and Vespasian the difference is none at all, as regards any interest of religion. Can human patience endure the spectacle of a religious man, for perfect folly, combining in their very worst efforts with those whom it was the object of his life to oppose?

4. But finally, once for all, to cut sharp off by the roots this corruption of a sublime prophecy, and to re-enthrone it in its ancient sanctity, it was not in the '*Orient*,' (which both technically meant Syria in that

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particular age, and is acknowledged to mean it here by all parties,) that Vespasian obtained the purple. The oracle, if it is to be translated from a Christian to a Pagan oracle, ought at least to speak the truth. Now, it happens not to have been Syria in which Vespasian was saluted emperor by the legions, but Alexandria; a city which in that age, was in no sense either in Syria or in Egypt. So that the great prophecy, if it is once suffered to be desecrated by Josephus, fails even of a *literal* fulfilment.

IV.— Meantime, all this is a matter of personal falsehood in a case of trying personal interest. Even under such a temptation, it is true that a man of generosity, to say nothing of principle, would not have been capable of founding his own defence upon the defamation of his nobler compatriots. But in fact it is ever thus: he, who has sunk deepest in treason, is generally possessed by a double measure of rancor against the loyal and the faithful. What follows, however, has respect — not to truth personal, truth of fact, truth momentary — but to truth absolute, truth doctrinal, truth eternal. Let us preface what we are going to say, by directing the reader's attention to this fact: how easy it is to observe any positive feature in a man's writings or conversation — how rare to observe the negative features; the *presence* of this or that characteristic is noticed in an hour, the absence shall often escape notice for years. That a friend, for instance, talks habitually on this or that literature, we know as familiarly as our own constitutional tastes; that he does *not* talk of any given literature, (the Greek suppose,) may fail to strike us through a whole life, until

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somebody happens to point our attention in that direction, and then perhaps we notice it in every hour of our intercourse. This only can excuse the various editors, commentators, and translators of Josephus, for having overlooked one capital omission in this author; it is this — *never in one instance does Josephus allude to the great prophetic doctrine of a Messiah.* To suppose him ignorant of this doctrine is impossible; it was so mixed up with the typical part of the Jewish religion, so involved in the ceremonies of Judaism, even waiving all the Jewish writers, that no Jew whatever, much less a master in Israel, a Pharisee, a doctor of the law, a priest, all which Josephus proclaims himself, could fail to know of such a doctrine, even if he failed to understand it, or failed to appreciate its importance.

Why, then, has Josephus suppressed it? For this reason: the doctrine offers a dilemma — a choice between two interpretations — one being purely spiritual, one purely political. The first was offensive and unintelligible (as was everything else in his native religion beyond the merely ceremonial) to his own worldly heart; *the other would have been offensive to the Romans.* The mysterious idea of a Redeemer, of a Deliverer, if it were taken in a vast spiritual sense, was a music like the fabled Arabian voices in the desert — utterly inaudible when the heart is deaf, and the sympathies untuned. The fleshly mind of Josephus everywhere shows its incapacity for any truths, but those of sense. On the other hand, the idea of a political deliverer — *that* was comprehensible enough; but unfortunately, it was too comprehensible. It was the very watchward for national conspiracies; and the

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Romans would state the alternative thus: The idea of a great deliverer is but another name for insurrection against us; of a petty deliverer, is incompatible with the grandeur implied by a vast prophetic machinery. Without knowing much, or caring anything about the Jewish prophecies, the Romans were sagacious enough to perceive two things — 1st, that most nations, and the Jews above all others, were combined by no force so strongly as by one which had the reputation of a heavenly descent; 2dly, that a series of prophecies, stretching from the century before Cyrus to the age of Pericles, (confining ourselves to the prophets from Isaiah to Haggai,) was most unlikely to find its adequate result and consummation in any petty change — any change short of a great national convulsion or revolution.

Hence it happened, that no mode in which a Roman writer *could* present the Jewish doctrine of a Messiah, was free from one or other of the objections indicated by the great Apostle: either it was too spiritual and mysterious, in which case it was 'foolishness' to himself; or it was too palpably the symbol of a political interest, too real in a worldly sense, in which case it was a 'stone of offence' to his Roman patrons — generally to the Roman people, specially to the Roman leaders. Josephus found himself between Scylla and Charybdis if he approached that subject. And therefore it was that he did *not* approach it.

V.—Yet, in this evasion of a theme which interested every Jew, many readers will see only an evidence of that timidity and servile spirit which must, of course, be presumed in one who had sold the cause of his country. His evasion, they will say, does not argue

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any peculiar carelessness for truth; it is simply one instance amongst hundreds of his mercenary cowardice. The doctrine of a Messiah was the subject of dispute even to the Jews — the most religious and the most learned. Some restrained it to an earthly sense; some expanded it into a glorified hope. And, though a double sense will not justify a man in slighting both senses, still, the very existence of a dispute about the proper acceptation of a doctrine, may be pleaded as some palliation for a timid man, in seeking to pass it *sub silentio*. But what shall we say to this coming count in the indictment? Hitherto Josephus is only an apostate, only a traitor, only a libeller, only a false witness, only a liar; and as to his Jewish faith, only perhaps a coward, only perhaps a heretic. But now he will reveal himself (in the literal sense of that word) as a *miscreant;* one who does not merely go astray in his faith, as all of us may do at times, but pollutes his faith by foul adulterations, or undermines it by knocking away its props — a *mis*believer, not in the sense of a heterodox believer, who errs as to some point in the superstruction, but as one who unsettles the foundations — the external substructions. In one short sentence, Josephus is not ashamed to wrench out the keystone from the great arch of Judaism; so far as a feeble apostate's force will go, he unlocks the whole cohesion and security of that monumental faith upon which, as its basis and plinth, is the 'starry-pointing' column of our Christianity. He delivers it to the Romans, as sound Pharisaic doctrine, that God had enjoined upon the Jews the duty of respectful homage to all epichorial or national deities — to all idols, that is to say, provided their rank were attested by

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a suitable number of worshippers. The Romans applied this test to the subdivisions amongst princes; if a prince ruled over a small number of subjects, they called him (without reference to the original sense of the word) a tetrarch; if a certain larger number, an ethnarch; if a still larger number, a king. So again, the number of throats cut determined the question between a triumph and an ovation. And upon the same principle, if we will believe Josephus, was regulated the public honor due to the Pagan deities. Count his worshippers — call the roll over.

Does the audacity of man present us with such another instance of perfidious *miscreancy*? God the Jehovah, anxious for the honor of Jupiter and Mercury! God, the Father of light and truth, zealous on behalf of those lying deities, whose service is everywhere described as 'whoredom and adultery!' He who steadfastly reveals himself as 'a jealous God,' jealous also (if we will believe this apostate Jew) on behalf of that impure Pantheon, who had counterfeited his name, and usurped His glory! Reader, it would be mere mockery and insult to adduce on this occasion the solemn denunciations against idolatrous compliances uttered through the great lawgiver of the Jews — the unconditional words of the two first commandments — the magnificent thunderings and lightnings upon the primal question, in the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, (which is the most awful peroration to a long series of prophetic comminations that exists even in the Hebrew literature;) or to adduce the endless testimonies to the same effect, so unvarying, so profound, from all the Hebrew saints, beginning with Abraham and ending with the prophets, through a period of fifteen hundred years.

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This is not wanted: this would be superfluous. But there is an evasion open to an apologist of Josephus, which might place the question upon a more casuistical footing. And there is also a colorable vindication of the doctrine in its very worst shape, viz., in one solitary text of the English Bible, according to our received translation. To this latter argument, the answer is—*first*, that the word *gods* is there a mistranslation of an Oriental expression for *princes; secondly*, that an argument from an *English* version of the Scriptures, can be none for a Jew, writing A. D. 70; *thirdly*, that if a word, a phrase, an idiom, *could* be alleged from any ancient and contemporary Jewish Scripture, what is one word against a thousand—against the whole current (letter and spirit) of the Hebrew oracles; what, any possible verbal argument against that which is involved in the acts, the monuments, the sacred records of the Jewish people? But this mode of defence for Josephus, will scarcely be adopted. It is the amended form of his doctrine which will be thought open to apology. Many will think that it is not the worship of false gods which the Jew palliates, but simply a decent exterior of respect to their ceremonies, their ministers, their altars: and this view of his meaning might raise a new and large question.

This question, however, in its modern shape, is nothing at all to us, when applying ourselves to Josephus. The precedents from Hebrew antiquity show us, that not merely no respect, no lip honor, was conceded to false forms of religion; but no toleration—not the shadow of toleration: 'Thine eye shall not spare them.' And we must all be sure that toleration is a

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very different thing indeed when applied to varieties of a creed essentially the same — toleration as existing amongst us people of Christendom, or even when applied to African and Polynesian idolatries, so long as we all know that the citadel of truth is safe, from the toleration applied in an age when the pure faith formed a little island of light in a world of darkness. Intolerance the most ferocious may have been among the sublimest of duties when the truth was so intensely concentrated, and so intensely militant; all advantages barely sufficing to pass down the lamp of religion from one generation to the next. The contest was for an interest then riding at single anchor. This is a very possible case to the understanding. And that it was in fact the real case, so that no compromise with idolatry could be suffered for a moment; that the Jews were called upon to scoff at idolatry, and spit upon it; to trample it under their feet as the spreading pestilence which would taint the whole race of man irretrievably, unless defeated and strangled by *them*, seems probable in the highest degree, from the examples of greatest sanctity amongst the Jewish inspired writers. Who can forget the blasting mockery with which Elijah overwhelms the prophets of Baal — the greatest of the false deities, Syrian or Assyrian, whose worship had spread even to the Druids of the Western islands? Or the withering scorn with which Isaiah pursues the whole economy of idolatrous worship? — how he represents a man as summoning the carpenter and the blacksmith; as cutting down a tree of his own planting and rearing; part he applies as fuel, part to culinary purposes; and then — having satisfied the meanest of his animal necessities — what will he do

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with the refuse, with the offal? Behold — 'of the residue he maketh himself a god?' Or again, who can forget the fierce stream of ridicule, like a flame driven through a blowpipe, which Jeremiah forces with his whole afflatus upon the process of idol manufacturing? The workman's part is described as unexceptionable: he plates it with silver and with gold: he rivets it with nails; it is delivered to order, true and in workmanlike style, so that as a figure, as a counterfeit, if counterfeits might avail, it is perfect. But then, on examination, the prophet detects oversights: it cannot speak; the breath of life has been overlooked; reason is omitted; pulsation has been left out; motion has been forgotten — it must be carried, 'for it cannot go.' Here, suddenly, as if a semichorus stepped in, with a moment's recoil of feeling, a movement of pity speaks, — 'Be not afraid of them, for they cannot do evil; neither also is it in them to do any good.' But in an instant the recoil is compensated: an overwhelming reaction of scorn comes back, as with the reflux of a tide; and a full chorus seems to exclaim, with the prophet's voice, — 'They (viz. the heathen deities) are altogether brutish and foolish; the stock is a doctrine of vanities.'

What need, after such passages, to quote the express injunction from Isaiah, (chap. xxx. 21, 22,) 'And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way; walk ye in it: *Ye shall defile* the covering of the graven images, &c.; ye shall cast them away as a polluted cloth'? Or this, (chap. xlii. 8,) 'I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another; neither my praise to graven images'? Once for all, if a man would satisfy himself upon this

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question of possible compromises with idolatry, let him run over the eleven chapters of Jeremiah, from the tenth to the twentieth inclusive. The whole sad train of Jewish sufferings, all the vast equipage of woes and captivities that were to pursue them through so many a weary century, are there charged upon that one rebellion of idolatry, which Josephus would have us believe not only to be privileged, but (and *that* is the reason that we call him a miscreant) would have us believe to have been promoted by a collusion emanating from God. In fact, if once it had been said authentically, Pay an outward homage to the Pagan Pantheon, but keep your hearts from going along with it — then, in that countenance to idolatry as a sufferable thing, and in that commendation of it to the forbearance and indulgence of men, would have lurked every advantage that polytheism could have desired for breaking down the total barriers of truth.

Josephus, therefore, will be given up to reprobation; apologist he will find none; he will be abandoned as a profligate renegade, who, having sold his country out of fear and avarice, having sold himself, sold also his religion, and his religion not simply in the sense of selling his individual share in its hopes, but who sold his religion in the sense of giving it up to be polluted in its doctrine for the accommodation of its Pagan enemies.

VI. — But, even after all this is said, there are other aggravations of this Jew's crimes. One of these, though hurrying, we will pause to state. The founder of the Jewish faith foresaw a certain special seduction certain to beset its professors in every age. But how and

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through what avenues? Was it chiefly through the base and mercenary propensities of human nature that the peril lay? No; but through its gentleness, its goodness, its gracious spirit of courtesy. And in that direction it was that the lawgiver applied his warnings and his resistance. What more natural than that an idolatrous wife should honor the religious rites which she had seen honored by her parents? What more essential to the dignity of marriage, than that a husband should show a leaning to the opinions and the wishes of his wife? It was seen that this condition of things would lead to a collision of feelings not salutary for man. The condition was too full of strife, if you suppose the man strong — of temptation, if you suppose him weak. How, therefore, was the casuistry of such a situation practically met? By a prohibition of marriages between Jews and pagans; after which, if a man were to have pleaded his conjugal affection in palliation of idolatrous compliances, it would have been answered — 'It *is* a palliation; but for an error committed in consequence of such a connection. Your error was different; it commenced from a higher point; it commenced in seeking for a connection which had been prohibited as a snare.' Thus it was that the 'wisest heart' of Solomon was led astray. And thus it was in every idolatrous lapse of the Jews; — they fell by these prohibited connections. Through that channel it was, through the goodness and courtesy of the human heart, that the Jewish law looked for its dangers, and provided for them. But the treason of Josephus came through no such generous cause. It had its origin in servile fear, self-interest the most mercenary, cunning the most wily. Josephus argued

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with himself — that the peculiar rancor of the Roman mind towards the Jews had taken its rise in religion. The bigotry of the Jews, for so it was construed by those who could not comprehend any possible ground of distinction in the Jewish God, produced a reaction of Roman bigotry. Once, by a sudden movement of condescension, the Senate and people of Rome had been willing to make room for Jehovah as an assessor to their own Capitoline Jove. This being declined, it was supposed at first that the overture was too overwhelming to the conscious humility of Judea. The truth neither was comprehended, nor could be comprehended, that this miserable Palestine, a dark speck in the blazing orb of the Roman empire, had declined the union upon any principle of superiority. But all things became known in time. This also became known; and the delirious passion of scorn, retorting scorn, was certainly never, before or since, exemplified on the same scale. Josephus, therefore, profoundly aware of the Roman feeling, sets himself, in this audacious falsehood, to propitiate the jealousy so wide awake, and the pride which had been so much irritated. You have been misinformed, he tells the Romans; we have none of that gloomy unsociality which is imputed to us. It is not true that we despise alien gods. We do not worship, but we venerate Jupiter. Our lawgiver commanded us to do so. Josephus hoped in this way to soothe the angry wounds of the Roman spirit. But it is certain that, even for a moment, he could not have succeeded. His countrymen of Jerusalem could not expose him; they had perished. But there were many myriads of his countrymen spread over the face of the world, who would contradict every word that

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any equivocating Jew might write. And this treachery of Josephus, therefore, to the very primal injunction of his native law, must have been as useless in the event as it was base in the purpose.

VII. — Now, therefore, we may ask, was there ever a more abject perfidy committed than this which we have exposed — this deliberate surrender, for a selfish object, of the supremacy and unity in the Jehovah of the Jews — this solemn renunciation of that law and its integrity, in maintenance of which seventy generations of Jews, including weak women and children, have endured the penalties of a dispersion and a humiliation more bitter by many degrees than death? Weighing the grounds of comparison, was a viler treason ever perpetrated? We take upon ourselves to say — No. And yet, even in treason there is sometimes a dignity. It is by possibility a bold act, a perilous act. Even in this case, though it will hardly be thought such, the treason of Josephus might have been dangerous: it was certainly committed under terror of the Roman sword, but it might have been avenged by the Jewish dagger. Had a written book in those days been as much a *publication* of a man's words as it is now, Josephus would not long have survived that sentence of his *Antiquities*. This danger gives a shadow of respectability to that act of Josephus. And therefore, when it is asked — can a viler act be cited from history? we now answer — yes: there is one even viler. And by whom committed? By Josephus. Listen, reader.

The overthrow of his country was made the subject of a Roman triumph — of a triumph in which his patrons, Vespasian and his two sons, figured as the

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centres of the public honor. Judea, with her banners trailing in the dust, was on this day to be carried captive. The Jew attended with an obsequious face, dressed in courtly smiles. The prisoners, who are to die by the executioner when the pomp shall have reached the summit of the hill, pass by in chains. What is their crime? They have fought like brave men for that dear country which the base spectator has sold for a bribe. Josephus, the prosperous renegade, laughs as he sees them, and hugs himself on his cunning. Suddenly a tumult is seen in the advancing crowds — what is it that stirs them? It is the sword of the Maccabees: it is the image of Judas Maccabæus, the warrior Jew, and of his unconquerable brothers. Josephus grins with admiration of the jewelled trophies. Next — but what shout is that which tore the very heavens? The abomination of desolation is passing by — the Law and the Prophets, surmounted by Capitoline Jove, vibrating his pagan thunderbolts. Judea, in the form of a lady, sitting beneath her palms — Judea, with her head muffled in her robe, speechless, sightless, is carried past. And what does the Jew? He sits, like a modern reporter for a newspaper, taking notes of the circumstantial features in this unparalleled scene, delighted as a child at a puppet-show, and finally weaves the whole into a picturesque narrative. The apologist must not think to evade the effect upon all honorable minds by supposing the case that the Jew's presence at this scene of triumph over his ruined country, and his subsequent record of its circumstances, might be a movement of frantic passion — bent on knowing the worst, bent on drinking up the cup of degradation to the very last drop. No, no; this escape

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is not open. The description itself remains to this hour in attestation of the astounding fact, that this accursed Jew surveyed the closing scene in the great agonies of Jerusalem — not with any thought for its frenzy, for its anguish, for its despair, but absorbed in the luxury of its beauty, and with a single eye for its purple and gold. 'Off, off, sir!' — would be the cry to such a wretch in any age of the world: to 'spit upon his Jewish gaberdine,' would be the wish of every honest man. Nor is there any thoughtful person who will allege that such another case exists. Traitors there have been many: and perhaps traitors who, trusting to the extinction of all their comrades, might have had courage to record their treasons. But certainly there is no other person known to history who did, and who proclaimed that he did, sit as a volunteer spectator of his buried country carried past in effigy, confounded with a vast carnival of rejoicing mobs and armies, echoing their jubilant outcries, and pampering his eyes with ivory and gold, with spoils, and with captives, torn from the funeral pangs of his country. That case is unique, without a copy, without a precedent.

So much for Josephus. We have thought it necessary to destroy that man's character, on the principles of a king's ship in levelling bulkheads and partitions when clearing for action. Such a course is requisite for a perfect freedom of motion. Were Josephus trustworthy, he would sometimes prove an impediment in the way of our views: and it is because he has been too carelessly received as trustworthy, that more accurate glimpses have not been obtained of Jewish affairs in more instances than one. Let the reader understand also that, as regards the Essenes, Josephus is not trust-

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worthy on a double reason; first, on account of his perfidy, as now sufficiently exposed, which too often interfered to make secondary perfidies requisite, by way of calling off the field of hunters from his own traces in the first; secondly, because his peculiar situation as a Pharisaic doctor of the law, combined with his character, (which surely could not entirely have concealed itself in any stage of his public life,) must have made it necessary for the Essenes to trust him very cautiously, and never to any extent that might have been irretrievable in the event of his turning informer. The Essenes, at all events, had *some* secret to guard; in any case, therefore, they were responsible for the lives of all their members, so far as they could be effected by confidences reposed; and, if that secret happened to be Christianity, then were they trebly bound to care and jealousy, for that secret involved not only many lives, but a mighty interest of human nature, so that a single instance of carelessness might be the most awful of crimes. Hence we understand at once why it is that Josephus never advanced beyond the lowest rank in the secret society of the Essenes. His worldly character, his duplicity, his weakness, were easily discerned by the eagle-eyed fathers of Christianity. Consequently, he must be viewed as under a perpetual *surveillance* from what may be called the *police* of history — liable to suspicion as one who had a frequent interest in falsehood, in order to screen himself; secondly, as one liable to unintentional falsehood, from the indisposition to trust him. Having now extracted the poison-fangs from the Jewish historian, we will take a further notice of his history in relation to the Essenes in Part III.

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PART III.

The secret history of Judea, through the two generations preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, might yet be illuminated a little better than it has been by Josephus. It would, however, require a separate paper for itself. At present we shall take but a slight glance or two at that subject, and merely in reference to the Essenes. Nothing shows the crooked conduct of Josephus so much as the utter perplexity, the mere labyrinth of doubts, in which he has involved the capital features of the last Jewish war. Two points only we notice, for their connection with the Essenes.

First, What was the cause, the outstanding pretext, on either side, for the Jewish insurrectionary war? We know well what were the real impulses to that war; but what was the capital and overt act on either side which forced the Jewish irritation into a hopeless contest? What was the ostensible ground alleged for the war?

Josephus durst not have told, had he known. He must have given a Roman, an *ex parte* statement, at any rate; and let that consideration never be lost sight of in taking his evidence. He might blame a particular Roman, such as Gessius Florus, because he found that Romans themselves condemned *him*. He might vaunt his veracity and his παρρησια in a little corner of the general story; but durst he speak plainly on the broad field of Judæan politics? Not for his life. Or, had the Roman magnanimity taken off his shackles, what became of his court favor and preferment, in case he spoke freely of Roman policy as a system?

Hence it is that Josephus shuffles so miserably when

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attempting to assign the cause or causes of the war. Four different causes he assigns in different places, not one of which is other than itself an effect from higher causes, and a mere symptom of the convulsions working below. For instance, the obstinate withdrawal of the daily sacrifice offered for Cæsar, which is one of the causes alleged, could not have occurred until the real and deep-seated causes of that war had operated on the general temper for some time. It was a public insult to Rome: would have occasioned a demand for explanation: would have been revoked: the immediate author punished: and all would have subsided into a personal affair, had it not been supported by extensive combinations below the surface, which could no longer be suppressed. Into them we are not going to enter. We wish only to fix attention upon the ignorance of Josephus, whether unaffected in this instance, or assumed for the sake of disguising truths unacceptable to Roman ears.

The question of itself has much to do with the origin of the Essenes.

Secondly, Who were those *Sicarii* of whom Josephus talks so much during the latter years of Jerusalem? Can any man believe so monstrous a fable as this, viz. that not one, but thousands of men were confederated for purposes of murder; 2dly, of murder not interested in its own success — murder not directed against any known determinate objects, but murder indiscriminate, secret, objectless, what a lawyer might call *homicidium vagum;* 3dly, that this confederacy should subsist for years, should levy war, should entrench itself in fortresses; 4thly, (which is more incomprehensible than all the rest,) should talk and

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harangue in the spirit of sublime martyrdom to some holy interest; 5thly, should breathe the same spirit into women and little children; and *finally*, that all, with one accord, rather than submit to foreign conquest, should choose to die in one hour, from the oldest to the youngest? Such a tale in its outset, in the preliminary confederation, is a tale of ogres and ogresses, not of human creatures trained under a divine law to a profound sense of accountability. Such a tale, in its latter sections, is a tale of martyrs more than human. Such a tale, as a whole, is self-contradictory. A vile purpose makes vile all those that pursue it. Even the East Indian Thugs are not congregated by families. It is much if ten thousand families furnish one Thug. And as to the results of such a league, is it possible that a zealous purpose of murder — of murder for the sake of murder, should end in nobility of spirit so eminent, that nothing in Christian martyrdoms goes beyond the extremity of self-sacrifice which even their enemies have granted to the Sicarii? 'Whose courage,' (we are quoting from the bitterest of enemies,) 'whose courage, or shall we call it madness, everybody was amazed at; for, when all sorts of torments that could be imagined were applied to their bodies, not one of them would comply so far as to confess, or seem to confess, that Cæsar was their lord — as if they received those torments, and the very fury of the furnace which burned them to ashes, with bodies that were insensible and with souls that exceedingly rejoiced. But what most of all astonished the beholders was the courage of the children; for not one of all these children was so far subdued by the torments it endured, as to confess Cæsar for its lord.

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Such a marvellous thing for endurance is the tender and delicate body of man, when supported by an unconquerable soul!'

No, no, reader, there is villany at work in this whole story about the Sicarii. We are duped, we are cheated, we are mocked. Felony, conscious murder, never in this world led to such results as these. Conscience it was, that must have acted here. No power short of that, ever sustained frail women and children in such fiery trials. A conscience it may have been erring in its principles; but those principles must have been divine. Resting on any confidence less than *that*, the resolution of women and children so tried must have given way. Here, too, evidently, we have the genuine temper of the Maccabees, struggling and suffering in the same spirit and with the same ultimate hopes.

After what has been exposed with regard to Josephus, we presume that *his* testimony against the Sicarii will go for little. That man may readily be supposed to have borne false witness against his brethren who is proved to have borne false witness against God. Him, therefore, or anything that he can say, we set aside. But as all is still dark about the Sicarii, we shall endeavor to trace their real position in the Jewish war. For merely to prove that they have been calumniated does not remove the cloud that rests upon their history. That, indeed, cannot be removed at this day in a manner satisfactory; but we see enough to indicate the purity of their intentions. And, with respect to their enemy Josephus, let us remember one fact, which merely the want of a personal interest in the question has permitted to lie so long in the shade, viz. that three distinct causes made it really impossible for

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that man to speak the truth. First, his own partisanship: having adopted one faction, he was bound to regard all others as wrong and hostile: Secondly, his captivity and interest: — in what regarded the *merits* of the cause, a Roman prisoner *durst* not have spoken the truth. These causes of distortion or falsehood in giving that history would apply even to honest men, unless with their honesty they combined a spirit of martyrdom. But there was a third cause peculiar to the position of Josephus, viz. conscious guilt and shame. He could not admit others to have been right but in words that would have confounded himself. If they were not mad, he was a poltroon: if they had done their duty as patriots, then was he a traitor; if they were not frantic, then was Josephus an apostate. This was a logic which required no subtle dialectician to point and enforce: simply the narrative, if kept steady to the fact and faithful, must silently suggest that conclusion to everybody. And for that reason, had there been no other, it was *not* steady; for that reason it was *not* faithful. Now let us turn to the Sicarii. Who were they?

Thirdly, It is a step towards the answer if we ask previously, *Who were the Galileans?* Many people read Josephus under the impression that, of course, this term designates merely the inhabitants of the two Galilees. We, by diligent collation of passages, have convinced ourselves that it does not — it means a particular faction in Jewish politics. And, which is a fact already noticed by Eusebius, it often includes many of the new Christian sect. But this requires an explanation.

Strange it seems to us that men should overlook so

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obvious a truth as that in every age Christianity must have counted amongst it nominal adherents the erring believer, the partial believer, the wavering believer, equally with the true, the spiritual, the entire, and the steadfast believer. What sort of believers were those who would have taken Christ and forcibly made him a king? Erroneous believers, it must be admitted; but still in some points, partially and obscurely, they must have been powerfully impressed by the truth which they had heard from Christ. Many of these might fall away when that personal impression was withdrawn; but many must have survived all hinderances and obstacles. *Semi-Christians* there must always have been in great numbers. Those who were such, in a merely religious view we believe to have been called Nazarenes; those in whom the political aspects, at first universally ascribed to Christianity, happened to predominate, were known by the more general name of Galileans. This name expressed in its foremost element, opposition to the Romans; in its secondary element, Christianity. And its rise may be traced thus:

Whoever would thoroughly investigate the very complex condition of Palestine in our Saviour's days, must go back to Herod the Great. This man, by his peculiar policy and his power, stood between the Jews and the Romans as a sort of Janus, or indifferent mediator. Any measure which Roman ignorance would have inflicted, unmodified, on the rawest condition of Jewish bigotry, he contrived to have tempered and qualified. For his own interest, and not with any more generous purpose, he screened from the Romans various ebullitions of Jewish refractori-

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ness, and from the Jews he screened all accurate knowledge of the probable Roman intentions. But after his death, and precisely during the course of our Saviour's life, these intentions transpired: reciprocal knowledge and menaces were exchanged; and the elements of insurrection began to mould themselves silently, but not steadily; for the agitation was great and increasing as the crisis seemed to approach. Herod the Great, as a vigorous prince, and very rich, might possibly have maintained the equilibrium, had he lived. But this is doubtful. In his old age various events had combined to shake his authority, viz., the tragedies in his own family, and especially the death of Mariamne;[2] by which, like Ferdinand of Aragon, or our Henry VII., under the same circumstances, he seemed in law to lose his title to the throne. But, above all, his compliance with idolatry, (according to the Jewish interpretation,) in setting up the golden eagle by way of homage to Rome, gave a shock to his authority that never could have been healed. Out of the affair of the golden eagle grew, as we are persuaded, the sect of the Herodians — those who justified a compromising spirit of dealing with the Romans. This threw off, as its anti-pole, a sect furiously opposed to the Romans. That sect, under the management of Judas, (otherwise called Theudas,) expanded greatly; he was a Galilean, and the sect were therefore naturally called Galileans. Into this main sea of Jewish nationality emptied themselves all other less powerful sects that, under any modification, avowed an anti-Roman spirit. The religious sect of the Christians was from the first caught and hurried away into this overmastering vortex. No matter that

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Christ lost no opportunity of teaching that his kingdom was not of this world. Did he not preach a new salvation to the House of Israel? Where could that lie but through resistance to Rome? His followers resolved to place him at their head as a king; and his crucifixion in those stormy times was certainly much influenced by the belief that, as the object of political attachment, he had become dangerous whether sanctioning that attachment or not.

Out of this sect of Galileans, comprehending all who avowed a Jewish nationality, (and therefore many semi-Christians, that is, men who, in a popular sense, and under whatever view, had professed to follow Christ,) arose the sect of Sicarii — that is, out of a vast multitude professing good-will to the service, these men separated themselves as the men of action, the executive ministers, the self-devoting soldiers. This is no conjecture. It happens that Josephus, who had kept us in the dark about these Sicarii in that part of his narrative which most required some clue to their purposes, afterwards forgets himself, and incidentally betrays [*Wars*, B. vii. chap. 8, sect. 1] that the Sicarii had originally been an offset from the sect founded by Judas the Galilean; that their general purpose was the same; so that, no doubt, it was a new feature of the time giving a new momentary direction to the efforts of the patriotic which had constituted the distinction and which authorized the denomination. Was Miltiades wrong? Was Tell wrong? Was Wallace wrong? Then, but not else, were the Galileans; and from them the Sicarii probably differed only as the brave doer differs from the just thinker. But the Sicarii, you will say, used

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unhallowed means. Probably not. We do not know what means they used, except most indistinctly from their base and rancorous enemy. The truth, so far as it can be descried through the dust of ages and the fury of partisanship, appears to be, that, at a moment when law slumbered and police was inefficient, they assumed the duties of resistance to a tyranny which even the Roman apologist admits to have been insufferable. They are not heard of as actors until the time when Gessius Florus, by opening the floodgates to military insolence, had himself given a license to an armed reaction. Where justice was sought in vain, probably the Sicarii showed themselves as ministers of a sudden retribution. When the vilest outrages were offered by foreigners to their women, probably they 'visited' for such atrocities. That state of things, which caused the tribunal to slumber, privileged the individual to awake. And in a land whose inspired monuments recorded for everlasting praise the acts of Judith, of Samson, of Judas Maccabæus, these summary avengers, the Sicarii, might reasonably conceive that they held the same heavenly commission under the same earthly oppression.

Reviewing the whole of that calamitous period, combining the scattered notices of the men and their acts, and the reflections of both thrown back from the mirrors offered to us by the measures of counteraction adopted at the time, we have little doubt that the Sicarii and the Zealots were both offsets from the same great sect of the Galileans, and that in an imperfect sense, or by tendency, all were Christians; whence partly the re-infusion of the ancient Jewish spirit into their acts and counsels and indomitable resolution.

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But also we believe that this very political leaven it was, as dispersed through the body of the Galileans, which led to the projection from the main body of a new order called the Essenes; this political taint, that is to say, combined with the danger of professing a *proselytizing* Christianity. In that anarchy, which through the latter years of Nero covered Judea as with the atmosphere of hell, the Christian fathers saw the necessity of separating themselves from these children of violence. They might be right politically — and certainly they began in patriotism — but too often the apprehensive consciences of Christians recoiled from the vengeance in which they ended. By tolerating the belief that they countenanced the Galileans or Sicarii, the primitive Church felt that she would be making herself a party to their actions — often bloody and vindictive, and sometimes questionable on any principles, since private enmities would too easily mingle with public motives, and if right, would be right in an earthly sense. But the persecution which arose at Jerusalem would strengthen these conscientious scruples by others of urgent prudence. A sect that proselytized was at any rate a hazardous sect in Judea; and a sect that had drawn upon itself persecution, must have felt a triple summons to the instant assumption of a disguise.

Upon this warning, we may suppose, arose the secret society of the Essenes; and its organization was most artful. In fact, the relations of Judaism to Christianity furnished a means of concealment such as could not have otherwise existed without positive deceit. By arranging four concentric circles about one mysterious centre — by suffering no advances to be made

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from the outside to the innermost ring but through years of probation, through multiplied trials of temper, multiplied obligations upon the conscience to secrecy, the Christian fathers were enabled to lead men onwards insensibly from intense Judaic bigotry to the purest form of Christianity. The outermost circle received those candidates only whose zeal for rigorous Judaism argued a hatred of pagan corruptions, and therefore gave some pledge for religious fervor. In this rank of novices no ray of light broke out from the centre — no suspicion of any alien doctrine dawned upon *them:* all was Judaic, and the whole Mosaic theology was cultivated alike. This we call the ultimate rank. Next, in the penultimate rank, the eye was familiarized with the prophecies respecting the Messiah, and somewhat exclusively pointed to that doctrine, and such other doctrines in the Mosaic scheme as express an imperfection, a tendency, a call for an integration. In the third, or antepenultimate rank, the attention was trained to the general characters of the Messiah, as likely to be realized in some personal manifestation; and a question was raised, as if for investigation, in what degree these characters met and were exemplified in the mysterious person who had so lately engaged the earnest attention of all Palestine. He had assumed the office of Messiah: he had suffered for that assumption at Jerusalem. By what evidences was it ascertained, in a way satisfactory to just men, that he was *not* the Messiah? Many points, it would be urged as by way of unwilling concession, did certainly correspond between the mysterious person and the prophetic delineation of the idea. Thus far no suspicion has been suffered to reach the disciple, that

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he is now rapidly aproaching to a torrent that will suck him into a new faith. Nothing has transpired which can have shocked the most angry Jewish fanaticism. And yet all is ready for the great transition. But at this point comes the last crisis for the aspirant. Under color of disputing the claims of Christ, the disciple has been brought acquainted with the whole mystery of the Christian theory. If his heart is good and true, he has manifested by this time such a sense of the radiant beauty which has been gradually unveiled, that he reveals his own trustworthiness. If he retains his scowling bigotry, the consistory at the centre are warned, and trust him no farther. He is excluded from the inner ranks, and is reconciled to the exclusion (or, if not, is turned aside from suspicion) by the impression conveyed to him, that these central ranks are merely the governing ranks, — highest in power, but not otherwise distinguished in point of doctrine.

Thus, though all is true from first to last, from centre to circumference — though nothing is ever taught but the truth — yet, by the simple precaution of graduation, and of not teaching everywhere the whole truth — in the very midst of truth the most heavenly, were attained all the purposes of deceit the most earthly. The case was as though the color of blue were a prohibited and a dangerous color. But upon a suggestion that yellow is a most popular color, and green tolerated, whilst the two extremes of blue and yellow are both blended and confounded in green, this last is selected for the middle rank; and then breaking it up by insensible degradations into the blue tints towards the interior, and the yellow towards the outermost

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rings, the case is so managed as to present the full popular yellow at the outside, and the celestial blue at the hidden centre.

Such was the constitution of the Essenes; in which, however, the reader must not overlook one fact, that, because the danger of Christianity as a religious profession was confined, during the Epichristian age, to Judea, therefore the order of the Essenes was confined to that region; and that in the extra-Syrian churches, the Christians of Palestine were known simply as the Brethren of Jerusalem, of Sepphoris, &c., without further designation or disguise. Let us now see, having stated the particular circumstances in which this disguise of a secret society called Essenes arose, what further arguments can be traced for identifying these Essenes with the Christians of Palestine.

We have already pursued the Essenes and the Christians through ten features of agreement. Now let us pursue them through a few others. And let the logic of the parallel be kept steadily in view: above, we show some characteristic reputed to be true of the Essenes; below, we show that this same characteristic is known from other sources to be true of the Christians.

No. I. — *The Essenes*, according to Josephus, *were in the habit of prophesying*. — The only prophets known in the days of the Apostles, and recognized as such by the Christian writers, Agabus for instance, and others, were Christians of the Christian brotherhood in Judea.

'*And it is but seldom*,' says Josephus, '*they miss in their predictions*.' — Josephus could not but have been

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acquainted with this prophecy of Agabus — too practical, too near, too urgent, too local, not to have rung throughout Judea; before the event, as a warning; after it, as a great providential miracle. He must therefore have considered Agabus as one of those people whom he means by the term Essenes. Now *we* know him for a Christian. *Ergo*, here is a case of identity made out between a Christian, owned for such by the Apostles, and one of the Essenes.

No. II. — *The Essenes particularly applied themselves to the study of medicine.* — This is very remarkable in a sect like the Essenes, who, from their rigorous habits of abstinence, must of all men have had the least personal call for medicine: but not at all remarkable if the Essenes are identified with the Christians. For,

1. Out of so small a number as four Evangelists, one was a physician — which shows at least the *fact* that medicine was cultivated amongst the Christians. But,

2. The *reason* of this will appear immediately in the example left by Christ, and in the motives to that example.

As to the example, at least nine in ten of Christ's miracles were *medical* miracles — miracles applied to derangements of the human system.

As to the motives which governed our Saviour in this particular choice, it would be truly ridiculous and worthy of a modern utilitarian, to suppose that Christ, would have suffered his time to be occupied, and the great vision of his contemplations to be interrupted, by an employment so trifling, (trifling surely by com-

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parison with his *transcendent* purposes,) as the healing of a few hundreds, more or less, in one small district through one brief triennium. This healing office was adopted, not chiefly for its own sake, but partly as a symbolic annunciation of a superior healing, abundantly significant to Oriental minds; chiefly, however, as the indispensable means, in an eastern land, of advertising his approach far and wide, and thus convoking the people by myriads to his instructions. From Barbary to Hindostan — from the setting to the rising sun — it is notorious that no travelling character is so certainly a safe one as that of *hakim* or physician. As he advances on his route, the news fly before him; disease is evoked as by the rod of Amram's son; the beds of sick people, in every rank, are ranged along the road-sides; and the beneficent dispenser of health or of relief moves through the prayers of hope on the one side, and of gratitude on the other. Well may the character be a protection: for not only is every invalid in the land his friend from the first, but every one who loves or pities an invalid. In fact, the character is *too* favorable, because it soon becomes burdensome; so that of late, in Affghanistan, Bokhara, &c., Englishmen have declined its aid — for inevitably it impedes a man's progress; and it exposes him to two classes of applications, one embarrassing from the extravagance of its expectations, (as that a man should understand doubtful or elaborate symptoms at a glance,) the other degrading to an Englishman's feelings, by calling upon him for aphrodisiacs or other modes of collusion with Oriental sensuality. This medical character the Apostles and their delegates adopted, using it both as the trumpet of summons to some cen-

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tral rendezvous, and also as the very best means of opening the heart to religious influences — the heart softened already by suffering, turned inwards by solitary musing; or melted, perhaps, by relief from anguish into fervent gratitude. This, upon consideration, we believe to have been the secret key to the apostolic meaning, in sending abroad the report that they cultivated medicine. They became what so many of us Englishmen have become in Oriental countries, *hakims;* and as with us, that character was assumed as a disguise for ulterior purposes that could not have been otherwise obtained [3] — our purposes were liberal, theirs divine. Therefore we conclude our argument No. II. by saying, that this medical feature in the Essenes is not only found in the Christians, but is found radicated in the very constitution of that body, as a *proselytizing* order, who could not dispense with some excuse or other for assembling the people in crowds.

No. III. — *The Essenes think that oil is a defilement.* — So says Josephus, as one who stood in the outermost rank of the order — admitted to a knowledge of some distinctions, but never to the secret meaning upon which those distinctions turned. Now with respect to this new characteristic, what is our logical duty? It is our duty to show that the Essenes, supposing them to be the latent Christians, had a special motive for rejecting oil; whereas on any other assumption they had no such motive. And next, we will show that this special motive has sustained itself in the traditionary usages of a remote posterity.

First of all, then, how came the Jews ever to use oil

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at all for the purpose of anointing their persons? It was adopted as a Grecian luxury, from their Grecian fellow-townsmen in cities without number, under the Syro-Macedonian kings. Not only in Syria proper, but in many other territories adjacent to Judea, there were cities like the two Cæsareas, the maritime and the inland, which were divided between Greeks and Jews; from which equality of rights came feuds and dreadful calamities in the end, but previously a strong contagion of Grecian habits. Hence, in part, it arose that the Jews in our Saviour's time were far from being that simple people which they *had* been whilst insulated in gloomy seclusion, or whilst associated only with monotonous Oriental neighbors. Amongst other luxuries which they had caught from their Grecian neighbors, were those of the bath and the palæstra. But in Jerusalem, as the heart of Judea,[4] and the citadel of Jewish principle, some front of resistance was still opposed to these exotic habits. The language was one aid to this resistance; for elsewhere the Greek was gaining ground, whilst here the corrupted Hebrew prevailed. But a stronger repulsion to foreigners was the eternal gloom of the public manners. No games in Jerusalem — no theatre — no hippodrome; for all these you must go down to the seaside, where Cæsarea, though built by a Jew, and half-peopled by Jews, was the Roman metropolis of Palestine, and with every sort of Roman luxury. To this stern Jerusalem standard all Jews conformed in the proportion of their patriotism; to Græcize or not to Græcize had become a test of patriotic feeling; and thus far the Essenes had the same general reasons as the Christians (supposing them two distinct orders of men) for setting their faces against the luxu-

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rious manners of the age. But if the Essenes were Christians, then we infer that they had a much stronger and a special motive to all kinds of abstinence, from the memorable charge of Christ to his evangelizing disciples; for which charge there was a double motive: 1st. To raise an ideal of abstinence; 2d. To release the disciple from all worldly cares, and concentrate his thoughts upon his duty. Now, the Essenes, if Christians, stood precisely in that situation of evangelizers.

Even thus far, therefore, the Essenes, as Christians, would have higher motives to abstinence than simply as a sect of Jews; yet still against oil, merely as a mode of luxury, their reasons were no stronger than against any luxury in any other shape. But a Christian of that day had a far more special restraint with regard to the familiar use of oil — not as a luxury, but as a consecrated symbol, he regarded it with awe — oil was to him under a perpetual interdict. The very name *Christos*, the anointed, gave in one instant an inaugurating solemnity, a baptismal value, to the act of anointing. Christians bearing in their very name (though then, by the supposition, a 'secret name,') a record and everlasting memorial of that *chrism* by which their Founder was made the Anointed of God, thought it little consistent with reverential feelings to use that consecrated rite of anointing in the economy of daily life. They abstained from this Grecian practice, therefore, not as the ignorant Jew imagines, from despising it, but from too much revering it. The symbolic meaning overpowered and eclipsed its natural meaning; and they abstained from the unction of the palæstra just as any man amongst ourselves, the least liable to superstition, would (if he had any pious feel-

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ing at all) recoil from the use of sacramental vessels in a service of common household life.

After this explanation of *our* view, we shall hardly need to go forward in proof, that this sanctity of the oil and of the anointing act has sustained itself in traditionary usages, and propagated its symbolic meaning to a posterity far distant from the Essenes. The most solemn of the ceremonies in the coronation of Christian kings is a memorial of this usage so reverentially treated by the Essenes. The affecting rite by which a new-born stranger upon earth is introduced within the fold of the Christian Church, is but the prolongation of that ancient chrism. And so essential, in earlier ages, was the presence of the holy Judæan oil used by the first Christians, were it only to the amount of one solitary drop, that volumes might be collected on the exertions made for tending the trees which produced it, and if possible for multiplying or transplanting them. Many eastern travellers in our own day, have given the history of those consecrated trees, and their slow declension to the present moment; and to this hour, in our London bills of mortality, there is one subdivision headed, '*Chrysom* children,'[5] which echoes from a distance of almost two thousand years the very act and ceremony which was surrounded with so much reverence by the Essenes.

No. IV. — *The Essenes think it a thing of good omen to be dressed in white robes.* — Yes; here again we find the external fact reported by Josephus, but with his usual ignorance of its smybolic value, and the secret record which it involved. He does not pretend to have been more than a novice — that is, at most

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he had been admitted into the lowest or outermost class, where no hint would be given of the Christian mysteries that would open nearer to the centre. The white robes were, of course, either the baptismal robes, the *albatæ vestes* noticed in note (5), or some other of the typical dresses assumed in different ranks and situations by the primitive Christians.

No. V. — *In the judgments they pass, the Essenes are most accurate and just; nor do they pass sentence by the votes of a court that is lower than a hundred.* — Here we find Josephus unconsciously alluding to the secret arrangements of the early Christian Church — the machinery established for conducting affairs so vast, by their tendency, in a condition so critical by its politics. The apostolical constitutions show that many of the forms in general councils, long after that age, had been traditionally derived from this infancy of the Christian Church — a result which is natural in any case, but almost inevitable where the original organizers are invested with that sort of honor and authority attached to inspired apostles. Here are positive traces of the Christian institutions, as viewed by one who knew of their existence under another name, and witnessed some of their decisions in the result, but was never admitted to any conjectural glimpse of their deliberations, or their system of proceeding, or their principles. Here is the truth, but traced by its shadow. On the other hand, if the Essenes (considered as distinct from Christians) were concerned, what need should *they* have of courts — numerous or not numerous? Had the Sadducees courts? Had the Pharisees courts? Doubtless they had, in their general character

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of Jews, but certainly not in their separate character as sects. Here again, therefore, in this very mention of courts, had there been no word dropped of their form, we see an insuperable evidence to the fact of the Christians being the parties concerned.

No. VI — The Essenes are divided by Philo-Judæus into the *Therapeutici* and the *Practici*. — A division into four orders has already been noticed, in explaining the general constitution of the society. These orders would very probably have characteristic names as well as barely distinguishing numbers. And if so, the name of *Therapeutæ* would exactly correspond to the *medical* evangelists (the *hakims*) noticed under No. II.

No. VII. — *Moreover the Essenes are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labors on the seventh day: for they even get their food ready on the day before, that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day.* — Now, then, it will be said, these Essenes, if Christians, ought *not* to have kept the Jewish Sabbath. This seems a serious objection. But pause, reader. One consideration is most important in this whole discussion. The Jews are *now* ranged in hostility to the Christians; because now the very name of Jew makes open proclamation that they have rejected Christianity; but in the earliest stage of Christianity, the Jew's relation to that new creed was in suspense and undetermined: he might be, 1, in a state of hostility; 2, in a state of certain transition; 3, in a state of deliberation. So far, therefore, from shocking his prejudices by violent alterations of *form*,

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and of outward symbol, not essential to the truth symbolized, the error of the early Christians would lie the other way; as in fact we know that it did in Judea, that is, in the land of the Essenes, where they retained too much rather than too little of Mosaic rites. Judaism is the radix of Christianity — Christianity the integration of Judaism. And so long as this integration was only *not accepted*, it was reasonable to presume it the subject of examination; and to regard the Jew as a Christian *in transitu*, and by tendency as a Christian elect. For one generation the Jews must have been regarded as novices in a lower class advancing gradually to the higher vows — not as enemies at all, but as imperfect aspirants. During this pacific interim, (which is not to be thought hostile, because individual Jews were hostile,) the Christians most entangled with Jews, viz., the Christians of Palestine, would not seek to widen the interval which divided them. On the contrary, they would too much concede to the prejudices of their Jewish brethren; they would adopt too many of the Jewish rites: as at first even circumcision — *à fortiori*, the Jewish Sabbath. Thus it would be during the period of suspense. Hostility would first commence when the two orders of men could no longer be viewed as the inviting and invited — as teaching and learning; but as affirming and denying — as worshippers and blasphemers. Then began the perfect schism of the two orders. Then began amongst the Syrian Christians the observance of a Christian Sunday; then began the general disuse of circumcision.

Here we are called upon to close this investigation, and for the following reasons: Most subjects offer themselves under two aspects at the least, often under more.

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This question accordingly, upon the true relations of the Essenes, may be contemplated either as a religious question, or as a question of Christian antiquities. Under this latter aspect, it is not improperly entertained by a journal whose primary functions are literary. But to pursue it further might entangle us more intricately in speculations of Christian doctrine than could be suitable to any journal not essentially theological. We pause, therefore; though not for want of abundant matter to continue the discussion. One point only we shall glance at in taking leave: — The Church of Rome has long ago adopted the very doctrine for which we have been contending: she has insisted, as if it were an important article of orthodox faith, upon the identity of the Essenes and the primitive Christians. But does not this fact subtract from the originality of our present essay? Not at all. If it did, we are careless. But the truth is — it does not. And the reason is this — as held by the Church of Rome the doctrine is simply what the Germans call a *machtspruch*, i. e. a hard dogmatical assertion, without one shadow of proof or presumptive argument — that so it *must have been*, nothing beyond the allegation of an old immemorial tradition — that so in fact it *was*. Papal Rome adopts our theory as a fact, as a blind result; but not as a result resting upon any one of our principles. Having, as she thinks, downright testimony and positive depositions upon oath, she is too proud to seek the aid of circumstantial evidence, of collateral probability, or of secret coincidence.

If so, and the case being that the Papal belief on this point (though coinciding with our own) offers it no collateral support, wherefore do we mention it? For

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the following reason — important at any rate — and specially important as a reason in summing up; as a reason to take leave with — as a linch-pin or iron bolt to lock up all our loose arguments into one central cohesion. Dogmatism, because it is haughty, because it is insolent, will not therefore of necessity be false. Nay, in this particular instance, the dogmatism of Rome rests upon a sense of transcendent truth — of truth compulsory to the Christian conscience. And what truth is that? It is one which will reply triumphantly to the main objection likely to be urged by the reader. He will be apt to say — This speculation is curious; but of what use is it? Of what consequence to us at this day, whether the Essenes were or were not the early Christians? Of such consequence, we answer, as to have forced the Church of Rome into a probable lie; that Church chose rather to forge a falsehood of mere historical fact, [in its pretended tradition of St. Mark,] than to suffer any risk as to the sum total and principle of truth doctrinal. The Christian religion offers two things — a body of truth, of things to be believed, in the first place; in the second place, a spiritual agency, a mediatorial agency for carrying these truths into operative life. Otherwise expressed, the Christian religion offers — 1st, a knowledge; 2d, a power — that is, 1st, a rudder to guide; 2dly, sails to propel. Now mark: — the Essenes, as reported to us by Josephus, by Philo-Judæus, or three centuries afterwards by Eusebius, do not appear to have claimed No. II.; and for this reason — because, as a secret society, and for the very cause which made it prudent for them to be a secret society, that part of their pretensions could not have been stated safely; not without avow-

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ing the very thing which it was their purpose to conceal, viz., their allegiance to Christ. But as to No. I. — as to the total *truths* taught by Christianity, taken in contradistinction to the spiritual *powers* — these the Essenes *did* claim; these they *did* appropriate; and therefore take notice of this: If the Essenes were not the early Christians in disguise, then was Christianity, *as a knowledge*, taught independently of Christ; nay, in opposition to Christ; nay, if we were to accept the hyperbolical fairy-tale of Pliny, positively two thousand years before the era of Christ. Grant the affirmative of our hypothesis, all is clear, all consistent; and Christianity here, as forever, justifies herself. Take the negative alternative — Suppose the Essenes a distinct body from the primitive Christians of Palestine, (*i. e.* those particular Christians who stood under the ban of Jerusalem,) and you have a deadlier wound offered to Christian faith than the whole army of infidels ever attempted. A *parhelion* — a double sun — a secondary sun, that should shine for centuries with equal proofs for its own authenticity as existed for the original sun, would not be more shocking to the sense and to the auguries of man than a secondary Christianity not less spiritual, not less heavenly, not less divine than the primary, pretending to a separate and even hostile origin. Much more is to be said in behalf of our thesis. But say more or say less — say it well or say it ill — the main argument — that the Essenes were the early Christians, locally in danger, and therefore locally putting themselves, with the wisdom of the serpent, under a cloud of disguise, impenetrable to fierce Jewish enemies and to timid or treacherous brethren — that argument is essential to the dignity of

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Christian truth. That theory is involved in the almighty principle — that, as there is but one God, but one hope, but one anchorage for man — so also there can be but one authentic faith, but one derivation of truth, but one perfect revelation.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 51.

'*The twelve tribes.*'— It is a beautiful circumstance in the symbology of the Jewish ritual, where all is symbolic and all significant, where all in Milton's language 'was meant mysteriously,' that the ten tribes were not blotted out from the breastplate after their revolt; no, nor after their idolatrous lapse, nor after their captivity, nor after their supposed utter dispersion. Their names still burned in the breastplate, though their earthly place knew them no more.

Note 2. Page 92.

'*Especially the death of Mariamne.*' — There is a remarkable proof extant of the veneration attached in Jewish imagination to the memory of this lady as a Maccabee. Long after her death, a pretender (or alleged pretender) to the name and rights of Alexander, one of her two murdered sons, appeared at Rome, and instantly drew to himself the enthusiastic support of all the Jews throughout Italy.

Note 3. Page 101.

'*That could not have been otherwise obtained.*' — One thing is entirely overlooked. Neither in Syria, nor any part of Asia

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Minor, of Achaia, &c., could the Apostles have called a general meeting of the people without instant liability to arrest as public disturbers. But the character of physicians furnished a privileged case, which operated as a summons, instant, certain, safe, uniformly intelligible to others, and without effort of their own.

Note 4. Page 102.

'*As the heart of Judea.*' — It was an old belief amongst the Jews, upon their ideas of cosmography, that Judea was the central region of the earth, and that Jerusalem was the *omphalos*, or navel of Judea — an idea which the Greeks applied to Delphi.

Note 5. Page 104.

'*Chrysom children.*' — Tell a child of three years old to pronounce the word *helm;* nine times out of ten it will say *helom* from the imperfection of its organs. By this mode of corruption came the word *chrysom*, from the baptismal *chrism* of the early Christians. In England, if a child dies within the first month of its life, it is called a *chrysom child;* whence the title in the London bills of mortality. In such a case, it was the beautiful custom amongst our ancestors, perhaps still is so amongst those who have the good feeling to appreciate these time-honored usages, to bury the innocent creature in its baptismal robe; to which the northern Spaniards add, as another symbol of purity, on the lid of the little coffin, —

'A happy garland of the pure white rose.'

How profoundly this mysterious chrism influenced the imaginations of our forefathers, is shown by the multiplied *ricochets* through which it impressed itself upon the vocabulary of the case; the oil, the act of anointing, the little infant anointed, the white robe in which it was dressed, — all and each severally bore the name of the *chrysom.*

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PHILOSOPHY OF HERODOTUS.

[1842.]

FEW, even amongst literary people, are aware of the true place occupied by Herodotus in universal literature; secondly, scarce here and there a scholar up and down a century is led to reflect upon the *multiplicity* of his relations to the whole range of civilization. We endeavor in these words to catch, as in a net, the gross prominent faults of his appreciation; on which account, first, we say pointedly, *universal* literature, not Grecian — since the primary error is, to regard Herodotus merely in relation to the literature of Greece; secondly, on which account we notice the circuit, the numerical amount, of his collisions with science — because the second and greater error is, to regard him exclusively as an historian. But now, under a juster allocation of his rank, as the general father of prose composition, Herodotus is nearly related to all literature whatsoever, modern not less than ancient; and as the father of what may be called ethnographical geography, as a man who speculated most ably on all the *humanities* of science — that is, on all the scientific questions which naturally interest our human sensibilities in this great temple which we look up to, the pavilion of the sky, the sun,

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the moon, the atmosphere, with its climates and its winds; or in this home which we inherit, the earth, with its hills and rivers — Herodotus ought least of all to be classed amongst historians: that is but a secondary title for *him;* he deserves to be rated as the leader amongst philosophical polyphistors, which is the nearest designation to that of encyclopædist current in the Greek literature. And yet is not this word *encyclopædist* much lower than his ancient name — *father of history?* Doubtless it is no great distinction *at present* to be an encyclopædist, which is often but another name for bookmaker, craftsman, mechanic, journeyman, in his meanest degeneration; yet in those early days, when the timid muse of science had scarcely ventured sandal deep into waters so unfathomable, it seems to us a great thing indeed, that one young man should have founded an entire encyclopædia for his countrymen upon those difficult problems which challenged their primary attention, because starting forward from the very roof — the walls — the floor of that beautiful theatre which they tenanted. The habitable world, ἡ οἰκουμένη, was now daily becoming better known to the human race; but how? Chiefly through Herodotus. There are amusing evidences extant, of the profound ignorance in which nations the most enlightened had hitherto lived, as to all lands beyond their own and its frontier adjacencies. But within the single generation (or the single half century) previous to the birth of Herodotus, vast changes had taken place. The mere revolutions consequent upon the foundation of the Persian Empire, had approximated the whole world of civilization. First came the conquest of Egypt by the second of

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the new emperors. This event, had it stood alone, was immeasurable in its effects for meeting curiosity, and in its immediate excitement for prompting it. It brought the whole vast chain of Persian dependencies, from the river Indus eastwards to the Nile westwards, or even through Cyrene to the gates of Carthage, under the unity of a single sceptre. The world was open. Jealous interdicts, inhospitable laws, national hostilities, always *in procinctu*, no longer fettered the feet of the merchant, or neutralized the exploring instincts of the philosophic traveller. Next came the restoration of the Jewish people. Judea, no longer weeping by the Euphrates, was again sitting for another half millennium of divine probation under her ancient palm-tree. Next after that came the convulsions of Greece, earthquake upon earthquake; the trampling myriads of Darius, but six years before the birth of Herodotus; the river-draining millions of Xerxes in the fifth year of his wandering infancy. Whilst the swell from this great storm was yet angry, and hardly subsiding, (a metaphor used by Herodotus himself, ετι οιδεοντων πρηγατων,) whilst the scars of Greece were yet raw from the Persian scymitar, her towns and temples to the east of the Corinthian isthmus smouldering ruins yet reeking from the Persian torch, the young Herodotus had wandered forth in a rapture of impassioned curiosity, to see, to touch, to measure, all those great objects, whose names had been so recently rife in men's mouths. The luxurious Sardis, the nation of Babylon, the Nile, the oldest of rivers, Memphis, and Thebes the hundred-gated, that were but amongst his youngest daughters, with the pyramids inscrutable as the heavens — all these he

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had visited. As far up the Nile as Elephantine, he had *personally* pushed his inquiries; and far beyond *that* by his obstinate questions from all men presumably equal to the answers. Tyre, even, he made a separate voyage to explore. Palestine he had trodden with Grecian feet; the mysterious Jerusalem he had visited, and had computed her proportions. Finally, as to Greece continental, though not otherwise connected with it himself than by the bond of language, and as the home of his Ionian ancestors, (in which view he often calls it by the great moral name of *Hellas*, regions that geographically belong to Asia and even to Africa,) he seems by mere casual notices, now prompted by an historical incident, now for the purpose of an illustrative comparison, to have known so familiarly, that Pausanias in after ages does not describe more minutely the local features to which he had dedicated a life, than this extraordinary traveller, for whom they did but point a period or circumstantiate a parenthesis. As a geographer, often as a hydrographer — witness his soundings thirty miles off the mouths of the Nile — Herodotus was the first great parent of discovery, as between nation and nation he was the author of mutual revelation; whatsoever any one nation knew of its own little ring-fence through daily use and experience, or had received by ancestral tradition, *that* he published to all other nations. He was the first central interpreter, the common dragoman to the general college of civilization that now belted the Mediterranean, holding up, in a language already laying the foundations of universality, one comprehensive mirror, reflecting to them all the separate chorography, habits, institutions,

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and religious systems of each. Nor was it in the facts merely, that he retraced the portraits of all leading states; whatsoever in these facts was mysterious, for that he had a self-originated solution; whatsoever was perplexing by equiponderant counter-assumptions, for that he brought a determining impulse to the one side or the other; whatsoever seemed contradictory, for that he brought a reconciling hypothesis. Were it the annual rise of a river, were it the formation of a famous kingdom by alluvial depositions, were it the unexpected event of a battle, or the apparently capricious migration of a people — for all alike Herodotus had such resources of knowledge as took the sting out of the marvellous, or such resources of ability as at least suggested the plausible. Antiquities or mythology, martial institutions or pastoral, the secret motives to a falsehood which he exposes, or the hidden nature of some truth which he deciphers — all alike lay within the searching dissection of this astonishing intellect, the most powerful lens by far that has ever been brought to bear upon the mixed objects of a speculative traveller.

To have classed this man as a mere fabling annalist, or even if it should be said on better thoughts — no, not as a fabling annalist, but as a great scenical-historian — is so monstrous an oversight, so mere a neglect of the proportions maintained amongst the topics treated by Herodotus, that we do not conceive any apology requisite for revising, in this place or at this time, the general estimate on a subject *always* interesting. What is everybody's business, the proverb instructs us to view as nobody's by duty; but under the same rule it is *any*body's by right; and what belongs

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to all hours alike, may, for that reason, belong, without blame, to January of the year 1842. Yet, if any man, obstinate in demanding for all acts a 'sufficient reason,' [to speak *Leibnitice*] demurs to our revision, as having no special invitation at this immediate moment, then we are happy to tell him that Mr. Hermann Bobrik has furnished us with such an invitation, by a recent review of Herodotus as a geographer,[1] and thus furnished even a technical plea for calling up the great man before our bar.

We have already said something towards reconsidering the thoughtless classification of a writer whose works do actually, in their major proportion, not essentially concern that subject to which, by their *translated* title, they are exclusively referred; for even that part which *is* historical, often moves by mere anecdotes or personal sketches. And the uniform object of these is not the history, but the political condition of the particular state or province. But we now feel disposed to press this rectification a little more keenly, by asking — What was the reason for this apparently wilful error? The reason is palpable: it was the ignorance of irreflectiveness.

I. — For with respect to the first oversight on the claim of Herodotus, as an earliest archetype of composition, so much is evident — that, if prose were simply the negation of verse, were it the fact that prose had no separate laws of its own, but that, to be a composer in prose meant only his privilege of being inartificial — his dispensation from the restraints of metre — then, indeed, it would be a slight nominal honor to have been the Father of Prose. But this is ignorance, though

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a pretty common ignorance. To walk well, it is not enough that a man abstains from dancing. Walking has rules of its own, the more difficult to perceive or to practise as they are less broadly *prononcés*. To forbear singing is not, therefore, to speak well or to read well: each of which offices rests upon a separate art of its own. Numerous laws of transition, connection, preparation, are different for a writer in verse and a writer in prose. Each mode of composition is a great art; well executed, is the highest and most difficult of arts. And we are satisfied that, one century before the age of Herodotus, the effort must have been greater to wean the feelings from a key of poetic composition to which all minds had long been attuned and prepared, than at present it would be for any paragraphist in the newspapers to make the inverse revolution by *suddenly* renouncing the modesty of prose for the impassioned forms of lyrical poetry. It was a great thing to be the leader of prose composition; great even, as we all can see at other times, to be absolutely first in any one subdivision of composition: how much more in one whole bisection of literature! And if it is objected that Herodotus was *not* the eldest of prose writers, doubtless, in an absolute sense, no man was. There must always have been short public inscriptions, not admitting of metre, as where numbers, quantities, dimensions were concerned. It is enough that all feeble tentative explorers of the art had been too meagre in matter, too rude in manner, like Fabius Pictor amongst the Romans, to captivate the ears of men, and *thus* to ensure their own propagation. Without annoying the reader by the cheap erudition of parading defunct names before him, it is certain that Scylax, an

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author still surviving, was nearly contemporary with Herodotus; and not very wide of him by his subject. In *his* case it is probable that the mere practical benefits of his book to the navigators of the Mediterranean in that early period, had multiplied his book so as eventually to preserve it. Yet, as Major Rennell remarks, 'Geog. Syst. of Herod.,' p. 610 — 'Scylax must be regarded as a seaman or pilot, and the author of a coasting directory;' as a mechanic artisan, ranking with Hamilton, Moore, or Gunter, not as a great liberal artist — an *intellectual* potentate like Herodotus. Such now upon the scale of intellectual claims as was this geographical rival by comparison with Herodotus, such doubtless were his rivals or predecessors in history, in antiquities, and in the other provinces which he occupied. And, generally, the fragments of these authors, surviving in Pagan as well as Christian collections, show that they were such. So that, in a high, virtual sense, Herodotus was to prose composition what Homer, six hundred years earlier, had been to verse.

II. — But whence arose the other mistake about Herodotus — the fancy that his great work was exclusively (or even chiefly) a history? It arose simply from a mistranslation, which subsists everywhere to this day. We remember that Kant, in one of his miscellaneous essays, finding a necessity for explaining the term *Histoire*, [why we cannot say, since the Germans have the self-grown word *Geschichte* for that idea,] deduces it, of course, from the Greek Ἱστορία. This brings him to an occasion for defining the term. And how? It is laughable to imagine the anxious reader bending his ear to catch the Kantean whisper, and

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finally solemnly hearing that 'Ιστορια means — History. Really, Professor Kant, we should almost have guessed as much. But such derivations teach no more than the ample circuit of Bardolph's definition — '*accommodated* — that whereby a man is, or may be thought to be' — what? '*accommodated.*' Kant was an excellent Latin scholar, but an indifferent Grecian. And spite of the old traditional 'Historiarum Libri Novem,' which stands upon all Latin title-pages of Herodotus, we need scarcely remind a Greek scholar, that the verb ἱστορεω or the noun ἱστορια *never* bears, in this writer, the latter sense of recording and memorializing. The substantative is a word frequently employed by Herodotus: often in the plural number; and uniformly it means *inquiries* or *investigations;* so that the proper English version of the title-page would be — 'Of the *Researches* made by Herodotus, Nine Books.' And, in reality, that is the very meaning, and the secret drift, the conservation running overhead through these nine sections to the nine muses. Had the work been designed as chiefly historical, it would have been placed under the patronage of the one sole muse presiding over History. But because the very opening sentence tells us that it is *not* chiefly historical, that it is so partially, that it rehearses the acts of men, [τα γενομενα,] together with the monumental structures of human labor, [τα ἐργα] — for the true sense of which word, in this position, see the first sentence in section thirty-five of *Euterpe*, and other things beside, [τα τε αλλα,] because, in short not any limited annals, because the mighty revelation of the world to its scattered inhabitants, because —

'Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus, nostri est farrago libelli —'

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therefore it was that a running title, or superscription, so extensive and so aspiring had at some time been adopted. *Every* muse, and not one only, is presumed to be interested in the work; and, in simple truth, this legend of dedication is but an expansion of variety more impressively conveyed of what had been already notified in the inaugural sentence; whilst both this sentence and that dedication were designed to meet the very misconception which has since, notwithstanding, prevailed.[2]

These rectifications ought to have some effect in elevating — first, the rank of Herodotus; secondly, his present attractions. Most certain we are that few readers are aware of the *various* amusement conveyed from all sources then existing, by this most splendid of travellers. Dr. Johnson has expressed in print, (and not merely in the strife of conversation,) the following extravagant idea — that to Homer, as its original author, may be traced back, at least in outline, *every* tale or complication of incidents, now moving in modern poems, romances or novels. Now, it is not necessary to denounce such an assertion as false, because, upon two separate reasons, it shows itself to be impossible. In the first place, the motive to such an assertion was — to emblazon the inventive faculty of Homer; but it happens that Homer could not invent anything, small or great, under the very principles of Grecian art. To be a fiction, as to matters of *action*, (for in embellishments the rule might be otherwise,) was to be ridiculous and unmeaning in Grecian eyes. We may illustrate the Grecian feeling on this point (however little known to critics) by our own dolorous disappointment when we opened the

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Alhambra of Mr. Washington Irving. We had supposed it to be some real Spanish or Moorish legend connected with that romantic edifice; and, behold! it was a mere Sadler's Wells travesty, (we speak of its plan, not of its execution,) applied to some slender fragments from past days. Such, but far stronger, would have been the disappointment to Grecian feelings, in finding any poetic (*à fortiori*, any prose) legend to be a fiction of the writers — words cannot measure the reaction of disgust. And thence it was that no tragic poet of Athens ever took for his theme any tale or fable not already pre-existing in *some* version, though now and then it might be the least popular version. It was *capital* as an offence of the intellect, it was lunatic to do otherwise. This is a most important characteristic of ancient taste; and most interesting in its philosophic value for any comparative estimate of modern art, as against ancient. In particular, no just commentary can ever be written on the poetics of Aristotle, which leaves it out of sight. Secondly, it is evident that the whole character, the very principle of movement, in many modern stories, depends upon sentiments derived remotely from Christianity; and others upon usages or manners peculiar to modern civilization; so as in either case to involve a moral anachronism if viewed as Pagan. Not the coloring only of the fable, but the very incidents, one and all, and the situations, and the perplexities, are constantly the product of something characteristically modern in the circumstances, sometimes, for instance, in the climate; *for the ancients had no experimental knowledge of severe climates.* With these double impossibilities before us, of any absolute fictions in a Pagan

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author that could be generally fitted to anticipate modern tales, we shall not transfer to Herodotus the impracticable compliment paid by Dr. Johnson to Homer. But it is certain that the very best collection of stories furnished by Pagan funds, lies dispersed through his great work. One of the best of the *Arabian Nights*, the very best as regards the structure of the plot — viz., the tale of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* — is evidently derived from an incident in that remarkable Egyptian legend, connected with the treasury-house of Rhampsinitus. This, except two of his Persian legends, (Cyrus and Darius,) is the longest tale in Herodotus, and by much the best in an artist's sense; indeed, its own remarkable merit, as a fable in which the incidents *successfully generate each other*, caused it to be transplanted by the Greeks to their own country. Vossius, in his work on the Greek historians, and a hundred years later, Valckenaer, with many other scholars, had pointed out the singular conformity of this memorable Egyptian story with several that afterwards circulated in Greece. The eldest of these transfers was undoubtedly the Bœotian tale (but in days before the name Bœotia existed) of Agamedes and Trophonius, architects, and sons to the King of Orchomenos, who built a treasure-house at Hyria, (noticed by Homer in his ship catalogue,) followed by tragical circumstances, the very same as those recorded by Herodotus. It is true that the latter incidents, according to the Egyptian version — the monstrous device of Rhampsinitus for discovering the robber at the price of his daughter's honor, and the final reward of the robber for his petty ingenuity, (which, after all, belonged chiefly to the deceased architect,)

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ruin the tale as a whole. But these latter incidents are obviously forgeries of another age; '*angeschlossen*' fastened on by fraud, '*an den eisten aelteren theil*,' to the first and elder part, as Mueller rightly observes, p. 97, of his *Orchomenos*. And even here it is pleasing to notice the incredulity of Herodotus, who was not, like so many of his Christian commentators, sceptical upon previous system and by wholesale, but equally prone to believe wherever his heart (naturally reverential) suggested an interference of superior natures, and to doubt wherever his excellent judgment detected marks of incoherency. He records the entire series of incidents as τα λεγομενα ακοῃ, reports of events which had reached him by hearsay, εμοι δε ου πιστα — 'but to me,' he says pointedly, 'not credible.'

In this view, as a *thesaurus fabularum*, a great repository of anecdotes and legends, tragic or romantic, Herodotus is so far beyond all Pagan competition, that we are thrown upon Christian literatures for any corresponding form of merit. The case has often been imagined playfully, that a man were restricted to one book; and, supposing all books so solemn as those of a religious interest to be laid out of the question, many are the answers which have been pronounced, according to the difference of men's minds. Rousseau, as is well known, on such an assumption made his election for Plutarch. But shall we tell the reader *why?* It was not altogether his taste, or his judicious choice, which decided him; for choice there can be none amongst elements unexamined — it was his limited reading. Except a few papers in the French *Encyclopédia* during his maturer years, and some dozen of works presented to him by their authors, his

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own friends, Rousseau had read little or nothing beyond Plutarch's Lives in a bad French translation, and Montaigne. Though not a Frenchman, having had an education (if such one can call it) thoroughly French, he had the usual puerile French craze about Roman virtue, and republican simplicity, and Cato, and 'all that.' So that *his* decision goes for little. And even he, had he read Herodotus, would have thought twice before he made up his mind. The truth is, that in such a case, suppose, for example, Robinson Crusoe empowered to import one book and no more into his insular hermitage, the most powerful of human books must be unavoidably excluded, and for the following reason: that in the direct ratio of its profundity will be the unity of any fictitious interest; a Paradise Lost, or a King Lear, could not agitate or possess the mind that they do, if they were at leisure to 'amuse' us. So far from relying on its unity, the work which should aim at the *maximum* of amusement, ought to rely on the *maximum* of variety. And in that view it is that we urge the paramount pretensions of Herodotus: since not only are his topics separately of primary interest, each for itself, but they are collectively the most varied in the quality of that interest, and they are touched with the most flying and least lingering pen; for, of all writers, Herodotus is the most cautious not to trespass on his reader's patience: his transitions are the most fluent whilst they are the most endless, justifying themselves to the understanding as much as they recommend themselves to the spirit of hurrying curiosity; and his narrations or descriptions are the most animated by the generality of their abstractions, whilst they are the most faithfully individual by the felicity of their minute circumstances.

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Once, and in a public situation, we ourselves denominated Herodotus the Froissart of antiquity. But we were then speaking of him exclusively as an historian; and even so, we did him injustice. Thus far it is true the two men agree, that both are less political, or reflecting, or moralizing, as historians, than they are scenical and splendidly picturesque. But Froissart is little else than an historian. Whereas Herodotus is the counterpart of some ideal Pandora, by the universality of his accomplishments. He is a traveller of discovery, like Captain Cook or Park. He is a naturalist, the earliest that existed. He is a mythologist, and a speculator on the origin, as well as value, of religious rites. He is a political economist by instinct of genius, before the science of economy had a name or a conscious function; and by two great records, he has put us up to the level of *all* that can excite our curiosity at that great era of moving civilization: — first, as respects Persia, by the elaborate review of the various satrapies or great lieutenancies of the empire — that vast empire which had absorbed the Assyrian, Median, Babylonian, Little Syrian, and Egyptian kingdoms, registering against each separate viceroyalty, from Algiers to Lahore beyond the Indus, what was the amount of its annual tribute to the gorgeous exchequer of Susa; and secondly, as respects Greece, by his review of the numerous little Grecian states, and their several contingents in ships, or in soldiers, or in both, (according as their position happened to be inland or maritime,) towards the universal armament against the second and greatest of the Persian invasions. Two such documents, such archives of political economy, do not exist elsewhere

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in history. Egypt had now ceased, and we may say that (according to the Scriptural prophecy) it had ceased forever to be an independent realm. Persia had now for seventy years had her foot upon the neck of this unhappy land; and, in one century beyond the death of Herodotus, the two-horned he-goat[3] of Macedon was destined to butt it down into hopeless prostration. But so far as Egypt, from her vast antiquity, or from her great resources, was entitled to a more circumstantial notice than any other satrapy of the great empire, such a notice it has; and we do not scruple to say, though it may seem a bold word, that, from the many scattered features of Egyptian habits or usages incidentally indicated by Herodotus, a better portrait of Egyptian life, and a better abstract of Egyptian political economy, might even yet be gathered, than from all the writers of Greece for the cities of their native land.

But take him as an exploratory traveller and as a naturalist, who had to break ground for the earliest entrenchments in these new functions of knowledge; we do not scruple to say that *mutatis mutandis*, and *concessis concedendis*, Herodotus has the separate qualifications of the two men whom we would select by preference as the most distinguished amongst Christian traveller-naturalists; he has the universality of the Prussian Humboldt; and he has the picturesque fidelity to nature of the English Dampier — of whom the last was a simple self-educated seaman, but strong-minded by nature, austerely accurate through his moral reverence for truth, and zealous in pursuit of knowledge, to an excess which raises him to a level with the noble Greek. Dampier, when in the last

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stage of exhaustion from a malignant dysentery, unable to stand upright, and surrounded by perils in a land of infidel fanatics, crawled on his hands and feet to verify some fact of natural history, under the blazing forenoon of the tropics; and Herodotus, having no motive but his own inexhaustible thirst of knowledge, embarked on a separate voyage, fraught with hardships, towards a chance of clearing up what seemed a difficulty of some importance in deducing the religious mythology of his country.

But it is in those characters by which he is best known to the world — viz., as an historian and a geographer — that Herodotus levies the heaviest tribute on our reverence; and precisely in those characters it is that he now claims the amplest atonement, having formerly sustained the grossest outrages of insult and slander on the peculiar merits attached to each of those characters. Credulous he was supposed to be, in a degree transcending the privilege of old garrulous nurses; hyperbolically extravagant beyond Sir John Mandeville; and lastly, as if he had been a Mendez Pinto or a Munchausen, he was saluted as the 'father of lies.' Now, on these calumnies, it is pleasant to know that his most fervent admirer no longer feels it requisite to utter one word in the way of complaint or vindication. Time has carried him round to the diametrical counterpole of estimation. Examination and more learned study have justified every iota of those statements *to which he pledged his own private authority.* His chronology is better to this day than any single system opposed to it. His dimensions and distances are so far superior to those of later travellers, whose hands were strengthened by

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all the powers of military command and regal autocracy, that Major Rennell, upon a deliberate retrospect of his works, preferred his authority to that of those who came after him as conquerors and rulers of the kingdoms which he had described as a simple traveller; nay, to the late authority of those who had conquered those conquerors. It is gratifying that a judge, so just and thoughtful as the Major, should declare the reports of Alexander's officers on the distances and stations in the Asiatic part of his empire, less trustworthy by much than the reports of Herodotus: yet, who was more liberally devoted to science than Alexander? or what were the humble powers of the foot traveller in comparison with those of the mighty earth-shaker, for whom prophecy had been on the watch for centuries? It is gratifying, that a judge like the Major should find the same advantage on the side of Herodotus, as to the distances in the Egyptian and Libyan part of this empire, on a comparison with the most accomplished of Romans, Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy, (for all are Romans who benefitted by any Roman machinery,) coming five and six centuries later. We indeed hold the accuracy of Herodotus to be all but marvellous, considering the wretched apparatus which he could then command in the popular measures. The *stadium*, it is true, was more accurate, because less equivocal in those Grecian days, than afterwards, when it inter-oscillated with the Roman *stadium;* but all the multiples of that stadium, such as the *schœnus*, the Persian *parasang*, or the military *stathmus*, were only less vague than the *coss* of Hindostan in their ideal standards, and as fluctuating *practically* as are all computed distances at all

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times and places. The close approximations of Herodotus to the returns of distances upon caravan routes of five hundred miles by the most vigilant of modern travellers, checked by the caravan controllers, is a bitter retort upon his calumniators. And, as to the consummation of the insults against him in the charge of wilful falsehood, we explain it out of hasty reading and slight acquaintance with Greek. The sensibility of Herodotus to his own future character in this respect, under a deep consciousness of his upright forbearance on the one side, and of the extreme liability on the other side to uncharitable construction for any man moving amongst Egyptian thaumaturgical traditions, comes forward continually in his anxious distinctions between what he gives on his own ocular experience (ὄψις) — what upon his own inquiries, or combination of inquiries with previous knowledge (ἱστορίη) — what upon hearsay (ἀκόη) — what upon current tradition (λόγος.) And the evidences are multiplied over and above these distinctions, of the irritation which besieged his mind as to the future wrongs he might sustain from the careless and the unprincipled. Had truth been less precious in his eyes, was it tolerable to be supposed a liar for so vulgar an object as that of creating a stare by wonder-making? The high-minded Grecian, justly proud of his superb intellectual resources for taking captive the imaginations of his half-polished countrymen, disdained such base artifices, which belong more properly to an effeminate and over-stimulated stage of civilization. And, once for all, he had announced at an early point as the *principle* of his work, as what ran along the whole line of his statements by way of basis or

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subsumption, (παρα παντα τον λογον ὑποκειται) — that he wrote upon the faith of hearsay from the Egyptians severally: meaning by 'severally,' (ἑκαζων) — that he did not adopt any chance hearsay, but such as was guarantied by the men who presided over each several department of Egyptian official or ceremonial life.

Having thus said something towards re-vindicating for Herodotus his proper station — first, as a *power* in literature; next, as a geographer, economist, mythologist, antiquary, historian — we shall draw the reader's attention to the remarkable 'set of the current' towards that very consummation and result of justice amongst the learned within the last two generations. There is no such case extant of truth slowly righting itself. Seventy years ago, the reputation of Herodotus for veracity was at the lowest ebb. That prejudice still survives popularly. But amongst the learned, it has gradually given way to better scholarship, and to two generations of travellers, starting with far superior preparation for their difficult labors. Accordingly, at this day, each successive commentator, better able to read Greek, and better provided with solutions for the inevitable errors of a *reporter*, drawing upon others for his facts, with only an occasional interposition of his own opinion, comes with increasing reverence to his author. The *laudator temporis acti* takes for granted in his sweeping ignorance, that we of the present generation are less learned than our immediate predecessors. It happens, that all over Europe the course of learning has been precisely in the inverse direction. Poor was the condition of Greek learning in England, when Dr. Cooke (one of the five wretched old boys who operated upon Gray's *Elegy* in the

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character of Greek translators) presided at Cambridge as their Greek professor. See, or rather touch with the tongs, his edition[4] of Aristotle's *Poetics*. Equally poor was its condition in Germany; for, if one swallow could make a summer, we had that in England. Poorer by far was its condition (as generally it is) in France: where a great Don in Greek letters, an Abbé who passed for unfathomably learned, having occasion to translate a Greek sentence, saying that 'Herodotus, even whilst Ionicizing, (using the Ionic dialect,) had yet spelt a particular name with the *alpha* and not with the *eta*,' rendered the passage 'Herodote et aussi Jazon.' The Greek words were these three — *Ἡροδοτος και ιαζων*. He had never heard that *και* means *even* almost as often as it means *and*: thus he introduced to the world, a fine new author, one Jazon, Esquire; and the squire holds his place in the learned Abbé's book to this day. Good Greek scholars are now in the proportion of perhaps sixty to one by comparison with the penultimate generation; and this proportion holds equally for Germany and for England. So that the restoration of Herodotus to his place in literature, his *Palingenesia*, has been no caprice, but is due to the vast depositions of knowledge, equal for the last seventy or eighty years to the accumulated product of the entire previous interval from Herodotus to 1760, in every one of those particular fields which this author was led by his situation to cultivate.

Meantime the work of cleansing this great tank or depository of archæology (the one sole reservoir, so placed in point of time as to collect and draw all the contributions from the frontier ground between the

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mythical and the *historical* period) is still proceeding. Every fresh laborer, by new accessions of direct aid, or by new combinations of old suggestions, finds himself able to purify the interpretation of Herodotus by wider analogies, or to account for his mistakes by more accurately developing the situation of the speaker. We also bring our own unborrowed contributions. We also would wish to promote this great labor, which, be it remembered, concerns no secondary section of human progress, searches no blind corners or nooks of history, but traverses the very crests and summits of human annals, with a solitary exception for the Hebrew Scriptures, so far as opening civilization is concerned. The commencement — the solemn inauguration — of history, is placed no doubt in the commencement of the Olympiads, 777 years before Christ. The doors of the great theatre were then thrown open. That is undeniable. But the performance did not actually commence till 555 B. C., (the *locus* of Cyrus.) Then began the great tumult of nations — the *termashaw*, to speak *Bengalicé*. Then began the procession, the pomp, the interweaving of the western tribes, not always by bodily presence, but by the *actio in distans* of politics. And the birth of Herodotus was precisely in the seventy-first year from that period. It is the greatest of periods that is concerned. And we also as willingly, we repeat, would offer our contingent. What we propose to do, is to bring forward two or three important suggestions of others not yet popularly known — shaping and pointing, if possible, their application — brightening their justice, or strengthening their outlines. And with these we propose to intermingle one or two suggestions, more exclusively our own.

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I. — *The Non-Planetary Earth of Herodotus in its relation to the Planetary Sun.*

Mr. Hermann Bobrik is the first torch-bearer to Herodotus, who has thrown a strong light on his theory of the earth's relation to the solar system. This is one of the *præcognita*, literally indispensable to the comprehension of the geographical basis assumed by Herodotus. And it is really interesting to see how one original error had drawn after it a train of others — how one restoration of light has now illuminated a whole hemisphere of objects. We suppose it the very next thing to a fatal impossibility, that any man should at once rid his mind so profoundly of all natural biases from education, or almost from human instinct, as barely to suspect the physical theory of Herodotus — barely to imagine the idea of a divorce occurring in *any* theory between the solar orb and the great phenomena of summer and winter. Prejudications, having the force of a necessity, had blinded generation after generation of students to the very admission *in limine* of such a theory as could go the length of dethroning the sun himself from all influence over the great vicissitudes of heat and cold — seed-time and harvest — for man. They did not see what actually *was*, what lay broadly below their eyes, in Herodotus, because it seemed too fantastic a dream to suppose that it *could* be. The case is far more common than feeble psychologists imagine. Numerous are the instances in which we actually see — not that which is really there to be seen — but that which we believe *à priori* ought to be there. And in cases so palpable as that of an external sense, it is not difficult to set the

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student on his guard. But in cases more intellectual or moral, like several in Herodotus, it is difficult for the teacher himself to be effectually vigilant. It was not anything actually seen by Herodotus which led him into denying the solar functions; it was his own independent speculation. This suggested to him a plausible hypothesis; plausible it was for that age of the world; and afterwards, on applying it to the actual difficulties of the case, this hypothesis seemed so far good, that it did really unlock them. The case stood thus: — Herodotus contemplated Cold not as a mere privation of Heat, but as a positive quality; quite as much entitled to 'high consideration,' in the language of ambassadors, as its rival heat; and quite as much to a 'retiring pension,' in case of being superannuated. Thus we all know, from Addison's fine raillery, that a certain philosopher regarded darkness not at all as any result from the absence of light, but fancied that, as some heavenly bodies are luminaries, so others (which he called *tenebrific stars*) might have the office of 'raying out positive darkness.' In the infancy of science, the idea is natural to the human mind; and we remember hearing a great man of our own times declare, that no sense of conscious power had ever so vividly dilated his mind, nothing so like a revelation, as when one day in broad sunshine, whilst yet a child, he discovered that his own shadow, which he had often angrily hunted, was no real existence, but a mere *hindering* of the sun's light from filling up the space screened by his own body. The old grudge, which he cherished against this coy fugitive shadow, melted away in the rapture of this great discovery. To him the discovery had doubtless been originally half-sug-

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gested by explanations of his elders imperfectly comprehended. But in itself the distinction between the *affirmative* and the *negative* is a step perhaps the most costly in *effort* of any that the human mind is summoned to take; and the greatest indulgence is due to those early stages of civilization when this step had *not* been taken. For Herodotus, there existed two great counter-forces in absolute hostility — heat and cold; and these forces were incarnated in the WINDS. It was the north and north-east wind, not any distance of the sun, which radiated cold and frost; it was the southern wind from Ethiopia, not at all the sun, which radiated heat. But could a man so sagacious as Herodotus stand with his ample Grecian forehead exposed to the noonday sun, and suspect no part of the calorific agency to be seated in the sun? Certainly he could not. But this partial agency is no more than what we of this day allow to secondary or tertiary causes apart from the principal. We, that regard the sun as upon the whole our planetary fountain of light, yet recognize an electrical *aurora*, a zodiacal light, &c., as substitutes not palpably dependent. We that regard the sun as upon the whole our fountain of heat, yet recognize many co-operative, many modifying forces having the same office — such as the local configuration of ground — such as sea neighborhoods or land neighborhoods, marshes or none, forests or none, strata of soil fitted to retain heat and fund it, or to disperse it and cool it. Precisely in the same way Herodotus did allow an agency to the sun upon the *daily* range of heat, though he allowed none to the same luminary in regulating the *annual* range. What caused the spring and autumn, the summer and winter, (though generally

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in those ages there were but two seasons recognized,) was the action of the winds. The diurnal arch of heat (as we may call it) ascending from sunrise to some hour, (say two P. M.,) when the sum of the two heats (the funded annual heat and the fresh increments of *daily* heat) reaches its *maximum*, and the descending limb of the same arch from this hour to sunset — this he explained entirely out of the sun's *daily* revolution, which to him was, of course, no apparent motion, but a real one in the sun. It is truly amusing to hear the great man's infantine simplicity in describing the effects of the solar journey. The sun rises, it seems, in India; and these poor Indians, roasted by whole nations at breakfast-time, are then up to their chins in water, whilst we thankless Westerns are taking 'tea and toast' at our ease. However, it is a long lane which has no turning; and by noon the sun has driven so many stages away from India, that the poor creatures begin to come out of their rivers, and really find things tolerably comfortable. India is now cooled down to a balmy Grecian temperature. 'All right behind!' as the mail-coach guards observe; but not quite right ahead, when the sun is racing away over the boiling brains of the Ethiopians, Libyans, &c., and driving Jupiter-Ammon perfectly distracted with his furnace. But when things are at the worst, the proverb assures us that they will mend. And for an early five o'clock dinner, Ethiopia finds that she has no great reason to complain. All civilized people are now cool and happy for the rest of the day. But, as to the woolly-headed rascals on the west coast of Africa, they 'catch it' towards sunset, and 'no mistake.' Yet why trouble our heads about inconsiderable black fellows

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like them, who have been cool all day whilst better men were melting away by pailfuls? And such is the history of a summer's day in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. As to little Greece, she is but skirted by the sun, who keeps away far to the south; thus she is maintained in a charming state of equilibrium by her fortunate position on the very frontier line of the fierce *Boreas* and the too voluptuous *Notos*.

Meantime one effect follows from this transfer of the solar functions to the winds, which has not been remarked, — viz. that Herodotus has a double north; one governed by the old noisy Boreas, another by the silent constellation Arktos. And the consequence of this fluctuating north, as might be guessed, is the want of any true north at all; for the two points of the wind and the constellation do not coincide in the first place; and secondly, the wind does not coincide with itself, but naturally traverses through a few points right and left. Next, the east also will be indeterminate from a different cause. Had Herodotus lived in a high northern latitude, there is no doubt that the ample range of difference between the northerly points of rising in the summer and the southerly in winter, would have forced his attention upon the fact, that only at the equinox, vernal or autumnal, does the sun's rising accurately coincide with the east. But in his Ionian climate, the deflections either way, to the north or to the south, were too inconsiderable to *force* themselves upon the eye; and thus a more indeterminate east would arise — never rigorously corrected, because requiring so moderate a correction. Now, a vague unsettled east, would support a vague unsettled north. And of course, through whatever arch of variations either of these

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points vibrated, precisely upon that scale the west and the south would follow them.

Thus arises, upon a simple and easy genesis, that condition of the compass (to use the word by anticipation) which must have tended to confuse the geographical system of Herodotus, and which does, in fact, account for the else unaccountable obscurities in some of its leading features. These anomalous features would, on their own account, have deserved notice; but now, after this explanation, they will have a separate value of illustrated proofs in relation to the present article, No. I.

II. — *The Danube of Herodotus considered as a counterpole to the Nile.*

There is nothing more perplexing to some of the many commentators on Herodotus than all which he says of the river Danube; nor anything easier, under the preparation of the preceding article. The Danube, or, in the nomenclature of Herodotus, the *Istros*, is described as being in all respects κατὰ παραλλήλου, by which we must understand corresponding rigorously, but antistrophically, (as the Greeks express it,) similar angles, similar dimensions, but in an inverse order, to the Egyptian Nile. The Nile, in its monstrous section, flows from south to north. Consequently the Danube, by the rule of *parallelism*, ought to flow through a corresponding section from north to south. But, say the commentators, it does *not*. Now, verbally they might seem wrong; but substantially, as regards the justification of Herodotus, they are right. Our business however, is not to justify Herodotus, but to explain him Undoubtedly there is a point about one hundred and

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fifty miles east of Vienna, where the Danube descends almost due south for a space of three hundred miles; and this is a very memorable reach of the river; for somewhere within that long corridor of land which lies between itself, (this Danube section,) and a direct parallel section equally long, of the Hungarian river Theiss, once lay, in the fifth century, the royal city or encampment of Attila. Gibbon placed the city in the northern part of this corridor, (or, strictly speaking, this Mesopotamia,) consequently about two hundred miles to the east of Vienna: but others, and especially Hungarian writers, better acquainted by personal examination with the ground, remove it to one hundred and fifty miles more to the south — that is, to the centre of the corridor, (or gallery of land enclosed by the two rivers.) Now, undoubtedly, except along the margin of this Attila's corridor, there is no considerable section of the Danube which flows southward; and this will not answer the postulates of Herodotus. Generally speaking, the Danube holds a headlong course to the east. Undoubtedly this must be granted; and so far it might seem hopeless to seek for that kind of parallelism to the Nile which Herodotus asserts. But the question for us does not concern what *is* or then *was* — the question is solely about what Herodotus can be shown to have meant. And here comes in, seasonably and serviceably, that vagueness as to the points of the compass which we have explained in the preceding article. This, connected with the positive assertion of Herodotus as to an inverse correspondency with the Nile, (north and south, therefore, as the antistrophe to south and north,) would place beyond a doubt the creed of Herodotus — which is the question that concerns

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ms. And, *vice versâ*, this creed of Herodotus as to the course of the Danube, in its main latter section when approaching the Euxine Sea, re-acts to confirm all we have said, *proprio marte*, on the indeterminate articulation of the Ionian compass then current. Here we have at once the *à priori* reasons making it probable that Herodotus would have a vagrant compass; secondly, many separate instances confirming this probability; thirdly, the particular instance of the Danube, as antistrophizing with the Nile, not reconcilable with any other principle; and fourthly, the following independent demonstration, that the Ionian compass must have been confused in its leading divisions. Mark, reader, Herodotus terminates his account of the Danube and its course, by affirming that this mighty river enters the Euxine — at what point? Opposite, says he, to Sinope. Could that have been imagined? Sinope, being a Greek settlement in a region where such settlements were rare, was notorious to all the world as the flourishing emporium, on the south shore of the Black Sea, of a civilized people, literally *hustled* by barbarians. Consequently — and this is a point to which all commentators alike are blind — the Danube descends upon the Euxine in a long line running due south. Else, we demand, how could it antistrophize with the Nile? Else, we demand, how could it lie right over against the Sinope? Else, we demand, how could it make that right-angle bend to the west in the earlier section of its course, which is presupposed in its perfect analogy to the Nile of Herodotus? If already it were lying east and west in that lower part of its course which approaches the Euxine, what occasion could it offer for a right-angle turn, or for any turn at all —

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what possibility for any *angle* whatever between this lower reach and that superior reach so confessedly running eastward, according to *all* accounts of its derivation?

For as respects the Nile, by way of close to this article, it remains to inform the reader — that Herodotus had evidently met in Upper Egypt slaves or captives in war from the regions of Soudon, Tombuctoo, &c. This is the opinion of Rennell, of Browne, the visiter of the Ammonian Oasis, and many other principal authorities; and for a *reason* which we always regard with more respect, though it were the weakest of reasons, than all the authorities of this world clubbed together. And this reason was the coincidence of what Herodotus reports, with the truth of facts first ascertained thousands of years later. These slaves, or some people from those quarters, had told him of a vast river lying east and west, of course the Niger, but (as he and they supposed) a superior section of the Nile; and therefore, by geometrical necessity, falling at right angles upon that other section of the Nile, so familiar to himself, lying south and north. Hence arose a faith that is not primarily hence, but hence in combination with a previous construction existing in his mind for the geometry of the Danube, that the two rivers Danube and Nile had a mystic relation as arctic and antarctic powers over man. Herodotus had been taught to figure the Danube as a stream of two main inclinations — an upper section rising in the extreme west of Europe, (possibly in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh,) whence he travelled with the arrow's flight due east in search of his wife the Euxine; but somewhere in the middle of his

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course, hearing that her dwelling lay far to the south, and having then completed his distance in longitude, afterwards he ran down his latitude with the headlong precipitation of a lover, and surprised the bride due north from Sinope. This construction it was of the Danube's course which subsequently, upon his hearing of a corresponding western limb for the Nile, led him to perceive the completion of that analogy between the two rivers, its absolute perfection, which already he had partially suspected. Their very figurations now appeared to reflect and repeat each other in solemn mimicry, as previously he had discovered the mimical correspondence of their functions; for this latter doctrine had been revealed to him by the Egyptian priests, then the chief depositaries of Egyptian learning. They had informed him, and evidently had persuaded him, that already more than once the sun had gone round to the region of Europe; pursuing his diurnal arch as far to the north of Greece as now he did to the south; and carrying in his equipage all the changes of every kind which were required to make Scythia an Egypt, and consequently to make the Istros a Nile. The same annual swelling then filled the channel of the Danube, which at present gladdens the Nile. The same luxuriance of vegetation succeeded as a dowry to the gay summer-land of Trans-Euxine and Para-Danubian Europe, which for thousands of years had seemed the peculiar heirloom of Egypt. Old Boreas — we are glad of that — was required to pack up 'his alls,' and be off; his new business was to plague the black rascals, and to bake them with hoar-frost; which must have caused them to shake their ears in some astonishment for a few

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centuries, until they got used to it. Whereas 'the sweet south wind' of the ancient mariner, leaving Africa, pursued 'the mariner's holloa, all over the Euxine and the *Palus Mœotis*. The Danube, in short, became the Nile; and the same deadly curiosity haunted its fountains. So that many a long-legged Bruce would strike off in those days towards Charlotte Square. But all in vain: 'Nec licuit populis' — or stop, to save the metre —

'Nec poteras, Charlotte, populis tum parva videri.'

Nobody would reach the fountains; particularly as there would be another arm, El-Abiad or white river, perhaps at Stockbridge. However, the explorers must have 'burned' strongly (as children say at hide-and-seek) when they attained a point so near to the fountains as *Blackwood's Magazine*, which doubtless was going on pretty well in those days.

We are sorry that Herodotus should have been so vague and uncircumstantial in his account of these vicissitudes; since it is pretty evident to any man who reflects on the case — that, had he pursued the train of changes inevitable to Egypt under the one single revolution affecting the Nile itself as a slime-depositing river, his judicious intellect would soon have descried the obliteration of the whole Egyptian valley, [elsewhere he himself calls that valley δωρον του Νειλου — a gift of the Nile,] consequently the obliteration of the people, consequently the immemorial extinction of all those records — or, if they were posterior to the last revolution in favor of Egypt, at any rate of the one record — which could have transmitted the memory of such an astonishing transfer. Meantime the reader is

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now in possession of the whole theory contemplated by Herodotus. It was no mere *lusus naturæ* that the one river repeated the other, and, as it were, mocked the other in form and geographical relations. It was no joke that lurked under that mask of resemblance. Each was the other alternately. It was the case of Castor and Pollux, one brother rising as the other set. The Danube could always comfort himself with the idea — that he was the Nile 'elect;' the other, or provisional Nile, only 'continuing to hold the seals until his successor should be installed in office.' The Nile, in fact, appears to have the best of it in our time; but then there is 'a braw time coming,' and, after all, swelling as he is with annual conceit, Father Nile, in parliamentary phrase, is but the 'warming-pan' for the Danube; keeping the office warm for him. A new administration is formed, and out he goes bag and baggage.

It is less important, however, for us, though far more so for the two rivers, to speculate on the reversion of their final prospects, than upon the present symbols of this reversion in the unity of their forms. That is, it less concerns us to deduce the harmony of their functions from the harmony of their geographical courses, than to abide by the inverse argument — that, where the former harmony was so loudly inferred from the latter, at any rate, that fact will demonstrate the existence of the latter harmony in the judgment and faith of Herodotus. He could not possibly have insisted on the analogy between the two channels geographically, as good in logic for authenticating a secret and prophetic analogy between their alternating offices, but that at least he must firmly have believed

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in the first of these analogies — as already existing and open to the verification of the human eye. The second or ulterior analogy might be false, and yet affect only its own separate credit, whilst the falsehood of the first was ruinous to the credit of both. Whence it is evident that of the two resemblances in form and function, the resemblance in form was the least disputable of the two for Herodotus.

This argument, and the others which we have indicated, and amongst those others, above all, the position of the Danube's mouths right over against a city situated as was Sinope, — *i. e.* not doubtfully emerging from either flank of the Euxine, west or east, but broadly and almost centrally planted on the southern basis of that sea, — we offer as a body of demonstrative proof, that, to the mature faith of Herodotus, the Danube or Istros ran north and south in its Euxine section, and that its right-angled section ran west and east — a very important element towards the true Europe of Herodotus, which, as we contend, has not yet been justly conceived or figured by his geographical commentators.

III. — *On the Africa of Herodotus.*

There is an amusing blunder on this subject committed by Major Rennell. How often do we hear people commenting on the Scriptures, and raising up aërial edifices of argument, in which every iota of the logic rests, unconsciously to themselves, upon the accidental words of the English version, and melts away when applied to the original text; so that, in fact, the whole has no more strength than if it were built upon a pun or an *équivoque*. Such is the blunder of the

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excellent Major. And it is not timidly expressed. At p. 410, *Geog. Hist. of Herodotus*, he thus delivers himself: — 'Although the term Lybia' (so thus does Rennell always spell it, instead of *Libya*) 'is occasionally used by Herodotus as synonymous to Africa, (especially in *Melpom.*, &c. &c.) yet it is almost exclusively applied to that part bordering on the Mediterranean Sea between the Greater Syrtis and Egypt;' and he concludes the paragraph thus: — 'So that Africa, and not Lybia, is the term generally employed by Herodotus.' We stared on reading these words, as Aladdin stared when he found his palace missing, and the old thief, who had bought his lamp, trotting off with it on his back far beyond the bills of mortality. Naturally we concluded that it was ourselves who must be dreaming, and not the Major; so, taking a bed-candle, off we marched to bed. But the next morning, air clear and frosty, ourselves as sagacious as a greyhound, we pounced at first sight on the self-same words. Thus, after all, it was the conceit mantling in our brain (of being in that instance a cut above the Major) which turned out to be the sober truth; and our modesty, our sobriety of mind, it was which turned out a windy tympany. Certainly, said we, if this be so, and that the word Africa is really standing in Herodotus, then it must be like that secret island called Ελβω, lying in some Egyptian lake, which was reported to Herodotus as having concealed itself from human eyes for five hundred and four years — a capital place it must have been against duns and the sheriff; for it was an English mile in diameter, and yet no man could see it until a fugitive king, happening to be hard pressed in the rear, dived into the water, and came up to the light in

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the good little island; where he lived happily for fifty years, and every day got bousy as a piper, in spite of all his enemies, who were roaming about the lake night and day to catch his most gracious majesty. He was king of Elbo, at least, if he had no particular subjects but himself, as Nap was in our days of Elba; and perhaps both were less plagued with rebels than when sitting on the ampler thrones of Egypt and France. But surely the good Major must have dreamed a dream about this word *Africa;* for how would it look in Ionic Greek — Αφρικη? Did any man ever see such a word? However, let not the reader believe that we are triumphing meanly in the advantage of our Greek. Milton, in one of his controversial works, exposing an insolent antagonist who pretended to a knowledge of Hebrew, which in fact he had not, remarks, that the man must be ignoble, whoever he were, that would catch at a spurious credit, though it were but from a language which really he did not understand. But so far was Major Rennell from doing this, that, when no call upon him existed for saying one word upon the subject, frankly he volunteered a confession to all the world — that Greek he had none. The marvel is the greater that, as Saunderson, blind from his infancy, was the best lecturer on colors early in the eighteenth century, so by far the best commentator on the Greek Herodotus has proved to be a military man, who knew nothing at all of Greek. Yes, mark the excellence of upright dealing. Had Major Rennell pretended to Greek, were it but as much as went to the spelling of the word Africa, here was he a lost man. *Blackwood's Magazine* would now have exposed him. Whereas, things being as they are, we respect him and admire

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him sincerely. And, as to his wanting this one accomplishment, every man wants some. We ourselves can neither dance a hornpipe nor whistle Jim Crow, without driving the whole musical world into black despair.

Africa, meantime, is a word imported into Herodotus by Mr. Beloe; whose name, we have been given to understand, was pronounced like that of our old domesticated friend the *bellows*, shorn of the *s*; and whose translation, judging from such extracts as we have seen in books, may be better than Littlebury's; but, if so, we should be driven into a mournful opinion of Mr. Littlebury. Strange that nearly all the classics, Roman as well as Greek, should be so meanly represented by their English reproducers. The French translators, it is true, are worse as a body. But in this particular instance of Herodotus they have a respectable translator. Larcher read Greek sufficiently; and was as much master of his author's peculiar learning as any one *general* commentator that can be mentioned.

But Africa the thing, not Africa the name, is that which puzzles all students of Herodotus, as, indeed, no little it puzzled Herodotus himself. Rennell makes one difficulty where in fact there is none; viz. that sometimes Herodotus refers Egypt to Libya, and sometimes refuses to do so. But in this there is no inconsistency, and no forgetfulness. Herodotus wisely adopted the excellent rule of 'thinking with the learned, and talking with the people.' Having once firmly explained his reasons for holding Egypt to be neither an Asiatic nor an African, but the neutral frontier artificially created by the Nile, as a long corridor of separation between Asia and Africa, after-

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wards, and generally, he is too little of a pedant to make war upon current forms of speech. What is the use of drawing off men's attention, in questions about *things*, by impertinent provisions of diction or by alien theories? Some people have made it a question — Whether Great Britain were not extra European? and the Island of Crete is generally assumed to be so. Some lawyers also, nay, some courts of justice, have entertained the question — Whether a man could be held related to his own mother? Not as though too remotely related, but as too nearly, and in fact absorbed within the lunar beams. Yet, in all such cases, the publicist — the geographer — the lawyer, continue to talk as other people do; and, assuredly, the lawyer would regard a witness as perjured who should say, in speaking of a woman notoriously his mother, 'Oh! I do assure you, Sir, the woman is no relation of mine.' The world of that day (and, indeed, it is not much more candid even now) would have it that Libya comprehended Egypt; and Herodotus, like the wise man that he was, having once or twice lodged his protest against that idea, then replies to the world — 'Very well, if you say so, it *is* so;' precisely as Petruchio's wife, to soothe her mad husband, agrees that the sun is the moon; and, back again, that it is *not* the moon.

Here there is no real difficulty; for the arguments of Herodotus are of two separate classes, and both too strong to leave any doubt that his private opinion never varied by a hair's breadth on this question. And it was a question far from verbal, of which any man may convince himself by reflecting on the disputes, at different periods, with regard to Macedon (both *Macedonis* the original germ, and *Macedonia* the expanded

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king[dom] as a claimant of co-membership in the household of Greece; or on the disputes, more angry if less scornful, between Carthage and Cyrene as to the true limits between the daughter of Tyre and the daughter of Greece. The very color of the soil in Egypt — the rich black loam, precipitated by the creative river — already symbolized to Herodotus the deep repulsion lying between Egypt on the one side, and Libya, where all was red; between Egypt on the one side, and Asia, where all was calcined into white sand. And, as to the name, does not the reader catch *us* still using the word 'Africa' instead of Libya, after all our sparring against that word as scarcely known by possibility to Herodotus?

But, beyond this controversy as to the true marches or frontier lines of the two great continents in common — Asia and Africa — there was another and a more grave one as to the size, shape and limitations of Africa in particular. It is true that both Europe and Asia were imperfectly defined for Herodotus. But he fancied otherwise; for them he could trace a vague, rambling outline. Not so for Africa, unless a great event in Egyptian records were adopted for true. This was the voyage of circumnavigation accomplished under the orders of Pharaoh Necho. Disallowing this earliest recorded *Periplus*, then no man could say of Africa whether it were a large island or a boundless continent having no outline traceable by man, or (which, doubtless, would have been the favorite creed) whether it were not a technical *akté* such as Asia Minor; that is, not a peninsula like the Peloponnesus, or the tongues of land near Mount Athos — because in that case the idea required a

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narrow neck or isthmus at the point of junction with the adjacent continent — but a square, tabular plate of ground, 'a block of ground' (as the Americans say) having three sides washed by some sea, but a fourth side absolutely untouched by any sea whatever. On this word *akté*, as a term but recently drawn out of obscurity, we shall say a word or two further on; at present we proceed with the great African *Periplus*. We, like the rest of this world, held this to be a pure fable, so long as we had never anxiously studied the ancient geography, and consequently had never meditated on the circumstances of this story under the light of that geography, or of the current astronomy. But we have since greatly changed our opinion. And, though it would not have shaken that opinion to find Rennell dissenting, undoubtedly it much strengthened our opinion to find so cautious a judge concurring. Perhaps the very strongest argument in favor of the voyage, if we speak of any *single* argument, is that which Rennell insists on — namely, the sole circumstance reported by the voyagers which Herodotus pronounced incredible, the assertion that in one part of it they had the sun on the right hand. And as we have always found young students at a loss for the meaning of that expression, since naturally it struck them that a man might bring the sun at any place on either hand, or on neither, we will stop for one moment to explain, for the use of such readers and ladies, that, as in military descriptions, you are always presumed to look *down* the current of a river, so that the 'right' bank of the Rhine, for instance, is *always* to a soldier the German bank, the 'left' *always* the French bank, in contempt of the traveller's position;

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so, in speaking of the sun, you are presumed to place your back to the east, and to accompany him on his daily route. In that position, it will be impossible for a man in our latitudes to bring the sun on his *right* shoulder, since the sun never even rises to be vertically over his head. First, when he goes south so far as to enter the northern tropic, would such a phenomenon be possible? and if he persisted in going beyond the equator and southern tropic, then he would find all things inverted as regards our hemisphere. Then he would find it as impossible, when moving concurrently with the sun, *not* to have the sun on his right hand, as with us to realize that phenomenon. Now, it is very clear, that if the Egyptian voyagers did actually double the Cape of Good Hope so far to the south of the equator, then, by mere necessity, this inexplicable phenomenon (for to them it *was* inexplicable) would pursue them for months in succession. Here is the point in this argument which we would press on the reader's consideration; and, inadvertently, Rennell has omitted this aspect of the argument altogether. To Herodotus, as we have seen, it was so absolutely incredible a romance, that he rejected it summarily. And why not, therefore, 'go the whole hog,' and reject the total voyage, when thus in *his* view partially discredited? That question recalls us to the certainty that there must have been *other* proofs, independent of this striking allegation, too strong to allow of scepticism in this wise man's mind. He fancied (and with *his* theory of the heavens, in which there was no equator, no central limit, no province of equal tropics on either hand of that limit, could he have done otherwise than fancy?) that Jack,

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after his long voyage, having then no tobacco for his recreation, and no grog, took out his allowance in the shape of wonder-making. He 'bounced' a little, he 'Cretized;' and who could be angry? And laughable it is to reflect, that, like the poor credulous mother, who listened complacently to her sea-fearing son whilst using a Sinbad's license of romancing, but gravely reproved him for the sin of untruth when he told her of flying fish, or some other simple zoölogical fact — so Herodotus would have made careful memoranda of this Egyptian voyage had it told of men 'whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders,' (since, if he himself doubted about the one-eyed Arimaspians, he yet thought the legend entitled to a report,) but scouted with all his energy the one great truth of the *Periplus*, and eternal monument of its reality, as a fable too monstrous for toleration. On the other hand, for us, who know its truth, and how *inevadibly* it must have haunted for months the Egyptians in the face of all their previous impressions, it ought to stand for an argument, strong 'as proofs of holy writ,' that the voyage did really take place. There is exactly one possibility, but a very slight one, that this truth might have been otherwise learned — learned independently; and *that* is, from the chance that those same Africans of the interior who had truly reported the Niger to Herodotus, (though erroneously as a section of the Nile,) might simultaneously have reported the phenomena of the sun's course. But we reply to that possible suggestion — that in fact it could scarcely have happened. Many other remarkable phenomena of Nigritia had *not* been reported; or had been dropped out of the record as idle or worthless. Secondly, as slaves

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they would have obtained little credit, except when *falling in with a previous idea or belief*. Thirdly, none of these men would be derived from any place to the south of the line, still less south of the southern tropic. Generally they would belong to the northern tropic: and (that being premised) what would have been the true form of the report? Not that they had the sun on the right hand; but that sometimes he was directly vertical, sometimes on the left hand, sometimes on the right. 'What, ye black villains! The sun, that never was known to change, unless when he reeled a little at seeing the anthropophagous banquet of Thyestes, — *he* to dance cotillions in this absurd way up and down the heavens, — why, hamstringing is too light a punishment for such insults to Apollo,' — so would a Greek have spoken. And, at least, if the report had survived at all, it would have been in this shape — as the report of an *uncertain* movement in the African sun.

But as a regular nautical report made to the Pharaoh of the day, as an extract from the log-book, for this reason it must be received as unanswerable evidence, as an argument that *never* can be surmounted on behalf of the voyage, that it contradicted all theories whatsoever — Greek no less than Egyptian — and was irreconcilable with all systems that the wit of men had *yet* devised [viz., two centuries before Herodotus] for explaining the solar motions. Upon this logic we will take our stand. Here is the strong-hold, the citadel, of the truth. Many a thing has been fabled, many a thing carefully passed down by tradition as a fact of absolute experience, simply because it fell in with some previous fancy or prejudice of men. And even Baron

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Munchausen's amusing falsehoods, if examined by a logician, will uniformly be found squared or adjusted; not indeed to a belief, but to a whimsical sort of plausibility, that reconciles the mind to the extravagance for the single instant that is required. If he drives up a hill of snow, and next morning finds his horse and gig hanging from the top of a church steeple, the monstrous fiction is still countenanced by the sudden thaw that had taken place in the night-time, and so far physically possible as to be removed beyond the limits of magic. And the very disgust, which revolts us in a *supplement* to the baron, that we remember to have seen, arises from the neglect of those smooth plausibilities. We are there summoned to believe blank impossibilities, without a particle of the baron's most ingenious and winning speciousness of preparation. The baron candidly admits the impossibility; faces it; regrets it for the sake of truth: but a *fact* is a *fact;* and he puts it to our equity — whether we also have not met with strange events. And never in a single instance does the baron build upwards, without a massy foundation of specious physical possibility. Whereas the fiction, if it had been a fiction, recorded by Herodotus, is precisely of that order which must have roused the '*incredulus odi*' in the fulness of perfection. Neither in the wisdom of man, nor in his follies, was there one resource for mitigating the disgust which would have pursued it. This powerful reason for believing the main fact of the circumnavigation — let the reader, courteous or not, if he is but the logical reader, condescend to balance in his judgment.

Other arguments, only less strong on behalf of the voyage, we will not here notice — except this one,

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most reasonably urged by Rennell, from his peculiar familiarity, even in that day, (1799,) with the currents and the prevalent winds of the Indian Ocean; viz., that such a circumnavigation of Africa was almost sure to prosper if commenced from the Red Sea, (as it was,) and even more sure to fail if taken in the inverse order; that is to say, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and so down the western shore of Africa in the first place. Under that order, which was peculiarly tempting for two reasons to the Carthaginian sailor or a Phœnician, Rennell has shown how all the currents, the *monsoons*, &c., would baffle the navigator; whilst, taken in the opposite series, they might easily co-operate with the bold enterpriser, so as to waft him, if once starting at a proper season, almost to the Cape, before (to use Sir Bingo Binks' phrase) he could say dumpling. Accordingly, a Persian nobleman of high rank, having been allowed to commute his sentence of capital punishment for that of sailing round Africa, did actually fail from the cause developed by Rennell. Naturally he had a Phœnician crew, as the king's best nautical subjects. Naturally they preferred the false route. Naturally they failed. And the nobleman, returning from transportation before his time, as well as *re infectâ*, was executed.

But (ah, villanous word!) some ugly objector puts in his oar, and demands to know — why, if so vast an event had actually occurred, it could have ever been forgotten, or at all have faded? To this we answer briefly, what properly ought to form a separate section in our notice of Herodotus. The event was *not* so vast as we, with our present knowledge of Africa, should regard it.

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This is a very interesting aspect of the subject. We laugh long and loud when we hear Des Cartes (great man as he was) laying it down amongst the golden rules for guiding his studies, that he would guard himself against all 'prejudices;' because we know that when a prejudice of any class whatever is seen as such, when it is recognized for a prejudice, from that moment it ceases to *be* a prejudice. Those are the true baffling prejudices for man, which he never suspects for prejudices. How widely, from the truisms of experience, could we illustrate this truth! But we abstain. We content ourselves with this case. Even Major Rennell, starting semi-consciously from his own previous knowledge, (the fruit of researches a thousand years later than Herodotus,) lays down an Africa at least ten times too great for meeting the Greek idea. Unavoidably Herodotus knew the Mediterranean dimensions of Africa; else he would have figured it to himself as an island, equal perhaps to Greece, Macedon and Thrace. As it was, there is no doubt to us, from many indications, that the Libya of Herodotus, after all, did not exceed the total bulk of Asia Minor carried eastwards to the Tigris. But there is not such an awful corrupter of truth in the whole world — there is not such an unconquerable enslaver of men's minds — as the blind instinct by which they yield to the ancient root-bound, trebly-anchored prejudications of their childhood and original belief. Misconceive us not, reader. We do not mean that, having learned such and such doctrines, afterwards they cling to them by affection. Not at all. We mean that, duped by a word and the associations clinging to it, they cleave to certain notions, not from any partiality to them, but because this pre-occupation

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intercepts the very earliest dawn of a possible conception or conjecture in the opposite direction. The most tremendous error in human annals is of that order. It has existed for seventeen centuries in strength; and is not extinct, though public in its action, as upon another occasion we shall show. In this case of Africa, it was not that men resisted the truth according to the ordinary notion of a 'prejudice;' it was that every commentator in succession upon Herodotus, coming to the case with the fullest knowledge that Africa was a vast continent, ranging far and wide in both hemispheres, unconsciously slipped into the feeling, that this had always been the belief of men; possibly some might a little fall short of the true estimate, some a little exceed it; but that, on the whole, it was at least as truly figured to men's minds as either of the two other continents. Accordingly, one and all have presumed a bulk for the Libya of Herodotus absolutely at war with the whole indications. And if they had once again read Herodotus under the guiding light furnished by a blank denial of this notion, they would have found a meaning in many a word of Herodotus, such as they never suspected whilst trying it only from one side. In this blind submission to a prejudice of words and clustering associations, Rennell also shares.

It will be retorted, however, that the long *time* allowed by Herodotus for the voyage argues a corresponding amplitude of dimensions. Doubtless a time upwards of two years, is long for a modern *Periplus*, even of that vast continent. But Herodotus knew nothing of monsoons, or trade-winds or currents: he allowed nothing for these accelerating forces, which

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were enormous, though allowing fully [could any Greek have neglected to allow?] for all the retarding forces. Daily advances of thirty-three miles at most; nightly reposes, of necessity to men without the compass; above all, a *coasting* navigation, searching (if it were only for water) every nook and inlet, bay, and river's mouth, except only where the winds or currents might violently sweep them past these objects. Then we are to allow for a long stay on the shore of Western Africa, for the sake of reaping, or having reaped by natives, a wheat harvest — a fact which strengthens the probability of the voyage, but diminishes the disposable time which Herodotus would use as the exponent of the space. We must remember the *want of sails aloft* in ancient vessels, the awkwardness of their build for fast sailing, and, above all, their cautious policy of never tempting the deep, unless when the wind would not be denied. And, in the meantime, all the compensatory forces of air and water, as utterly unsuspected by Herodotus, we must subtract from *his* final summation of the effective motion, leaving for the actual measure of the sailing, as inferred by Herodotus — consequently for the measure of the *virtual* time, consequently of the African space, as only to be collected from the time so collected — a very small proportion indeed, compared with the results of a similar voyage, even by the Portuguese, about A. D. 1500. To Herodotus we are satisfied that Libya (disarming it of its power over the world's mind, in the pompous name of Africa) was not bigger than the true Arabia as known to ourselves.

And hence, also, by a natural result, the obliteration of this *Periplus* from the minds of men. It accom-

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plished no great service, as men judged. It put a zone about a large region, undoubtedly; but what sort of a region? A mere worthless wilderness, now θηριωδης, dedicated by the gods to wild beasts, now ἀμμωδης, trackless from sands, and everywhere fountainless, arid, scorched (as they believed) in the interior. Subtract Egypt, as not being part, and to the world of civilization at that time Africa must have seemed a worthless desert, except for Cyrene and Carthage, its two choice gardens, already occupied by Phœnicians and Greeks. This, by the way, suggests a new consideration, viz. that even the Mediterranean extent of Africa must have been unknown to Herodotus — since all beyond Carthage, as Mauritania, &c., would wind up into a small inconsiderable tract, as being *dispuncted* by no great states or colonies.

Therefore it was that this most interesting of all circumnavigations at the present day did virtually and could not but perish as a vivid record. It measured a region which touched no man's prosperity. It recorded a discovery, for which there was no permanent appreciator. A case exists at this moment, in London, precisely parallel. There is a chart of New Holland still preserved among the κειμηλια of the British Museum, which exhibits a *Periplus* of that vast region, from some navigator, almost by three centuries prior to Captain Cook. A rude outline of Cook's labors in that section had been anticipated at a time when it was not wanted. Nobody cared about it: value it had none, or interest; and it was utterly forgotten. That it did not also perish in the literal sense, as well as in spirit, was owing to an accident.

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IV. — *The Geographical* Akté *of Greece.*

We had intended to transfer, for the use of our readers; the diagram imagined by Niebuhr in illustration of this idea. But our growing exorbitance from our limits warns us to desist. Two points only we shall notice: — 1. That Niebuhr — not the traveller, as might have been expected, but his son, the philosophic historian — first threw light on this idea, which had puzzled multitudes of honest men. Here we see the same similarity as in the case of Rennell; in that instance, a man without a particle of Greek, 'whipped' (to speak *Kentuckicé*) whole crowds of sleeping drones who had more than they could turn to any good account. And in the other instance, we see a sedentary scholar, travelling chiefly between his study and his bedroom, doing the work that properly belonged to active travellers. 2. Though we have already given one illustration of an *Atké* in Asia Minor, it may be well to mention as another, the vast region of Arabia. In fact, to Herodotus the tract of Arabia and Syria on the one hand, made up one akté (the southern) for the Persian empire; Asia Minor, with part of Armenia, made up another aktê (the western) for the same empire; the two being at right angles, and both abutting on imaginary lines drawn from different points of the Euphrates.

V. — *Chronology of Herodotus.*

The commentator of Herodotus, who enjoys the reputation of having best unfolded his chronology, is the French President Buhier. We cannot say that this opinion coincides with our own. There is a la-

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mentable imbecility in all the chronological commentators, of two opposite tendencies. Either they fall into that folly of drivelling infidelity, which shivers at every fresh revelation of geology, and every fresh romance of fabulous chronology, as fatal to religious truths; or, with wiser feelings but equal silliness, they seek to protect Christianity by feeble parryings, from a danger which exists only for those who never had any rational principles of faith; as if the mighty *spiritual* power of Christianity were to be thrown upon her defence, as often as any old woman's legend from Hindostan, (see Bailly's *Astronomie*,) or from Egypt, (see the whole series of chronological commentators on Herodotus,) became immeasurably extravagant, and exactly in proportion to that extravagance. Amongst these latter chronologers, perhaps Larcher is the most false and treacherous. He affects a tragical start as often as he rehearses the traditions of the Egyptian priests, and assumes a holy shuddering. 'Eh quoi! Ce seroit donc ces gens-là, qui auroient osé insulter à notre sainte religion!' But, all the while, beneath his mask the reader can perceive, not obscurely, a perfidious smile; as on the face of some indulgent mother, who affects to menace with her hand some favorite child at a distance, whilst the present subject of a stranger's complaint, but, in fact, ill disguises her foolish applause to its petulance.

Two remarks only we shall allow ourselves upon this extensive theme, which, if once entered in good earnest, would go on to a length more than commensurate with all the rest of our discussion.

1. The three hundred and thirty kings of Egypt, who were interposed by the Egyptian priests, between

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the endless dynasty of the gods, and the pretty long dynasty of real kings, (the Shepherds, the Pharaohs, &c.) are upon this argument to be objected as mere unmeaning fictions, viz. *that they did nothing*. This argument is reported as a fact, (*not as* an argument of rejection,) by Herodotus himself, and reported from the volunteer testimony of the priests themselves; so that the authority for the number of kings, is also their inertia. Can there be better proof needed, than that they were men of straw, got up to color the legend of a prodigious antiquity? The reign of the gods was felt to be somewhat equivocal, as susceptible of allegoric explanations. So this long human dynasty is invented to furnish a substantial basis for the extravagant genealogy. Meantime, the whole three hundred and thirty are such absolute *fainéans*, that, confessedly, not one act — not one monument of art or labor — is ascribed to their auspices; whilst *every one* of the real unquestionable sovereigns, coinciding with known periods in the tradition of Greece, or with undeniable events in the divine simplicity of the Hebrew Scriptures, is memorable for some warlike act, some munificent institution, or some almost imperishable monument of architectural power.

2. But weaker even than the fabling spirit of these genealogical inanities, is the idle attempt to explode them, by turning the years into days. In this way, it is true, we get rid of pretensions to a cloudy antiquity, by wholesale clusters. The moonshine and the fairy tales vanish — but how? To leave us all in a moonless quagmire of substantial difficulties, from which (as has been suggested more than once) there is no extrication at all; for if the diurnal years are to rec-

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cncile us to the three hundred and thirty kings, what becomes of the incomprehensibly short reigns, (not averaging above two or three months for each,) on the long basis of time assumed by the priests; and this in the most peaceful of realms, and in fatal contradiction to another estimate of the priests, by which the kings are made to tally with as many γενεαι, or generations of men? Herodotus, and doubtless the priests, understood a generation in the sense then universally current, agreeably to which, three generations were valued to a century.

But the questions are endless which grow out of Herodotus. Pliny's Natural History has been usually thought the greatest treasure-house of ancient learning. But we hold that Herodotus furnishes by much the largest basis for vast commentaries revealing the archæologics of the human race: whilst, as the eldest of prose writers, he justifies his majestic station as a brotherly assessor on the same throne with Homer.

NOTES.

NOTE 1. Page 118.

Geographie des Herodot — dargestellt von Hermann Bobrik Koenigsberg, 1838.

NOTE 2. Page 122.

But — '*How* has it prevailed,' some will ask, 'if an error? Have not great scholars sate upon Herodotus?' Doubtless,

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many. There is none greater, for instance, merely as a verbal scholar, than Valckenaer. Whence we conclude that inevitably this error has been remarked somewhere. And as to the erroneous Latin version still keeping its ground, partly that may be due to the sort of superstition which everywhere protects old usages in formal situations like a title-page, partly to the fact that there is no happy Latin word to express 'Researches.' But, however, that may be, all the scholars in the world cannot get rid of the evidence involved in the general use of the word ἱστορία by Herodotus.

NOTE 3. Page 128.

'*Two-horned*,' in one view, as having no successor, Alexander was called the *one-horned*. But it is very singular that all Oriental nations, without knowing anything of the scriptural symbols under which Alexander is described by Daniel as the strong he-goat who butted against the ram of Persia, have always called him the 'two-horned,' with a covert allusion to his European and his Asiatic kingdom. And it is equally singular, that unintentionally this symbol falls in with Alexander's own assumption of a descent from Libyan Jupiter-Ammon, to whom the double horns were an indispensable and characteristic symbol.

NOTE 4. Page 133.

Which edition the arrogant Mathias in his *Pursuits of Literature*, (by far the most popular of books from 1797 to 1802,) highly praised; though otherwise amusing himself with the folly of the other gray-headed men contending for a schoolboy's prize. It was the loss of dignity, however, in the translator, not their worthless Greek, which he saw cause to ridicule.

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PLATO'S REPUBLIC.

[1841.]

THERE is no reader who has not heard of Solon's apologetic distinction between the actual system of laws, framed by himself for the Athenian people, under his personal knowledge of the Athenian temper, and that better system which he would have framed in a case where either the docility of the national character had been greater, or the temptations to insubordination had been less. Something of the same distinction must be taken on behalf of Plato, between the ideal form of Civil Polity which he contemplated in the ten books of his Republic, and the practical form which he contemplated in the thirteen books of his Legislative System.* In the former work he supposes himself to be instituting an independent state, on such principles as were philosophically best; in the latter, upon the assumption that what might be the best as an abstraction, was not always the best as adapted to a perverse human

* *Thirteen books.* — There are twelve books of the *Laws*; but the closing book, entitled the *Epinomos*, or Supplement to *the Laws*, adds a thirteenth. We have thought it convenient to designate the entire work by the collective name of the *Legislative System.*

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nature, nor under ordinary circumstances the most likely to be durable. He professes to make a compromise between his sense of duty as a philosopher, and his sense of expedience as a man of the world. Like Solon, he quits the normal for the attainable; and from the ideal man, flexible to all the purposes of a haughty philosophy, he descends in his subsequent speculations to the refractory Athenian as he really existed in the generation of Pericles. And this fact gives a great value to the more abstract work; since no inferences against Greek sentiment or Greek principles could have been drawn from a work applying itself to Grecian habits as he found them, which it would not be easy to evade. 'This,' it would have been said, 'is not what Plato approved — but what Plato conceived to be the best compromise with the difficulties of the case under the given civilization.' Now, on the contrary, we have Plato's view of absolute optimism, the true *maximum perfectionis* for social man, in a condition openly assumed to be modelled after a philosopher's ideal. There is no work, therefore, from which profounder draughts can be derived of human frailty and degradation, under its highest intellectual expansion, previously to the rise of Christianity. Just one century dated from the birth of Plato, which, by the most plausible thronology, very little preceded the death of Pericles, the great Macedonian expedition under Alexander was proceeding against Persia. By that time the bloom of Greek civility had suffered. That war, taken in connection with the bloody feuds that succeeded it amongst the great captains of Alexander, gave a shock to the civilization of Greece; so that

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upon the whole, until the dawn of the Christian era, more than four centuries later, it would not be possible to fix on any epoch more illustrative of Greek intellect, or Greek refinement, than precisely that youth of Plato, which united itself by immediate consecutive succession to the most brilliant section in the administration of Pericles. It was, in fact, throughout the course of the Peloponnesian war — the one sole war that divided the whole household of Greece against itself, giving motive to efforts, and dignity to personal competitions — contemporary with Xenophon and the younger Cyrus, during the manhood of Alcibiades, and the declining years of Socrates — amongst such coevals and such circumstances of war and revolutionary truce — that Plato passed his fervent youth. The bright sunset of Pericles still burned in the Athenian heavens; the gorgeous tragedy and the luxuriant comedy, so recently created, were now in full possession of the Athenian stage; the city was yet fresh from the hands of its creators — Pericles and Phidias; the fine arts were towering into their meridian altitude; and about the period when Plato might be considered an adult *sui juris*, that is, just four hundred and ten years before the birth of Christ, the Grecian intellect might be said to culminate in Athens. Any more favorable era for estimating the Greek character, cannot, we presume, be suggested. For, although personally there might be a brighter constellation gathered about Pericles, at a date twenty-five years antecedent to this era of Plato's maturity, still, as regarded the results upon the collective populace of Athens, *that* must have become most conspicuous and palpable in the gene-

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ration immediately succeeding. The thoughtfulness impressed by the new theatre, the patriotic fervor generated by the administration of Pericles, must have revealed themselves most effectually after both causes had been operating through one entire generation. And Plato, who might have been kissed as an infant by Pericles, but never could have looked at that great man with an eye of intelligent admiration — to whose ear the name of Pericles must have sounded with the same effect as that of Pitt to the young men of our British Reform Bill — could yet better appreciate the elevation which he had impressed upon the Athenian character, than those who, as direct coevals of Pericles, could not gain a sufficient 'elongation' from his beams to appreciate his lustre. Our inference is — that Plato, more even than Pericles, saw the consummation of the Athenian intellect, and witnessed more than Pericles himself the civilization effected by Pericles.

This consideration gives a value to every sentiment expressed by Plato. The Greek mind was then more intensely Greek than at any subsequent period. After the period of Alexander, it fell under exotic influences — alien and Asiatic in some cases, regal and despotic in others. One hundred and fifty years more brought the country under the Roman yoke; after which the true Grecian intellect never spoke a natural or genial language again. The originality of the Athenian mind had exhaled under the sense of constraint. But as yet, and throughout the life of Plato, Greece was essentially Grecian, and Athens radically Athenian.

With respect to those particular works of Plato which concern the constitution of governments, there

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is this special reason for building upon *them* any inferences as to the culture of Athenian society — that probably these are the most direct emanations from the Platonic intellect, the most purely representative of Plato individually, and the most prolonged or sustained effort of his peculiar mind. It is customary to talk of a Platonic philosophy as a coherent whole, that may be gathered by concentration from his disjointed dialogues. Our belief is, that no such systematic whole exists. Fragmentary notices are all that remain in his works. The four minds, from whom we have received the nearest approximation to an orbicular system, or total body of philosophy, are those of Aristotle, of Des Cartes, of Leibnitz, and lastly, of Immanuel Kant. All these men have manifested an ambition to complete the cycle of their philosophic speculations; but, for all that, not one of them has come near to his object. How much less can any such cycle or systematic whole be ascribed to Plato! His dialogues are a succession of insulated essays, upon problems just then engaging the attention of thoughtful men in Greece. But we know not how much of these speculations may really belong to Socrates, into whose mouth so large a proportion is thrown; nor have we any means of discriminating between such doctrines as were put forward occasionally by way of tentative explorations, or trials of dialetic address, and on the other hand, such as Plato adopted in sincerity of heart, whether originated by his master or by himself. There is, besides, a very awkward argument for suspending our faith in any one doctrine as rigorously Platonic. We are assured beforehand, that the intolerance of the Athenian peo-

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ple in the affair of Socrates, must have damped the speculating spirit in all philosophers who were not prepared to fly from Athens. It is no time to be prating as a philosophical free-thinker, when bigotry takes the shape of judicial persecution. That one cup of poison administered to Socrates, must have stifled the bold spirit of philosophy for a century to come. This is a reasonable presumption. But the same argument takes another and a more self-confessing form in another feature of Plato's writings; viz., in his affectation of a double doctrine — esoteric, the private and confidential form authorized by his final ratification — and exoteric, which was but another name for impostures with which he duped those who might else have been calumniators. But what a world of falsehoods is wrapped up in this pretence! First of all, what unreflecting levity to talk of this twofold doctrine as at all open to the human mind on questions taken generally! How many problems of a philosophic nature can be mentioned, in which it would be at all possible to maintain this double current, flowing collaterally, of truth absolute and truth plausible? No such double view would be often available under any possible sacrifice of truth. Secondly, if it were, how thoroughly would that be to adopt and renew those theatrical pretences of the itinerant *Sophistæ*, or encyclopædic hawkers of knowledge, whom elsewhere and so repeatedly, Plato, in the assumed person of Socrates, had contemptuously exposed. Thirdly, in a philosophy by no means remarkable for its opulence in ideas, which moves at all only by its cumbrous superfluity of words, (partly in disguise of which, under the forms of conversation,

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we believe the mode of dialogue to have been first adopted,) how was this double expenditure to be maintained? What tenfold contempt it impresses upon a man's poverty, where he himself forces it into public exposure by insisting on keeping up a double establishment in the town and in the country, at the very moment that his utmost means are below the decent maintenance of one very humble household! Or let the reader represent to himself the miserable *charlatanerie* of a gasconading secretary affecting to place himself upon a level with Cæsar, by dictating to three amanuenses at once, when the slender result makes it painfully evident, that to have kept one moving in any respectable manner, would have bankrupted his resources. But, lastly, when this affectation is maintained of a double doctrine, by what test is the future student to distinguish the one from another? Never was there an instance in which vanity was more short-sighted. It would not be possible by any art or invention more effectually to extinguish our interest in a scheme of philosophy — by summarily extinguishing all hope of our separating the true from the false, the authentic from the spurious — than by sending down to posterity this claim to a secret meaning lurking behind a mask. If the key to the distinction between true and false is set down with the philosophy, then what purpose of concealment is attained? Who is it that is duped? On the other hand, if it is *not* sent down, what purpose of truth is attained? Who is it then that is *not* duped? And if Plato relied upon a confidential successor as the oral expounder of his secret meaning, how blind must he have been to the course of human contingen-

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cies, who should not see that this tradition of explanation could not flow onwards through four successive generations without inevitably suffering some fatal interruption; after which, once let the chain be dropped, the links would never be recoverable, as, in effect, we now see to be the result. No man can venture to say amidst many blank contradictions and startling inconsistencies, which it is that represents the genuine opinion of Plato; which the ostensible opinion for evading a momentary objection, or for provoking opposition, or perhaps simply for prolonging the conversation. And upon the whole, this one explosion of vanity, of hunger — bitter penury affecting the riotous superfluity of wealth — has done more to check the interest in Plato's opinions than all his mysticism and all his vagueness of purpose. In other philosophers, even in him who professedly adopted the rule of '*σκοτισον*,' '*darken your meaning*,' there is some chance of arriving at the real doctrine, because, though hidden, it is one. But with a man who avows a purpose of double-dealing, to understand is, after all, the smallest part of your task. Having perhaps with difficulty framed a coherent construction for the passage, having with much pains entitled yourself to say, — 'Now I comprehend,' — next comes the question, *What is it* you comprehend? Why, perhaps a doctrine which the author secretly abjured; in which he was misleading the world: in which he put forward a false opinion for the benefit of other passages, and for the sake of securing safety to those in which he revealed what he supposed to be the truth.

There is, however, in the following political hypo-

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thesis of Plato, less real danger from this conflict of two meanings, than in those cases where he treated a great pre-existing problem of speculation. Here, from the practical nature of the problem, and its more *ad libitum* choice of topics, he was not forced upon those questions, which, in a more formal theorem, he could not uniformly evade. But one difficulty will always remain for the perplexity of the student — viz. in what point it was that Socrates had found it dangerous to tamper with the religion of Greece, if Plato could safely publish the free-thinking objections which are here avowed. In other respects, the *Ideal Republic* of Plato will surprise those who have connected with the very name of Plato a sort of starry elevation, and a visionary dedication to what is pure. Of purity, in any relation, there will be found no traces: of visionariness, more than enough.

The *First* book of the Polity, or general form of Commonwealths, is occupied with a natural, but very immethodical discussion of justice. Justice — as one of those original problems unattainable in solitary life, which drove men into social union, that by a common application of their forces that might be obtained which else was at the mercy of accident — should naturally occupy the preliminary place in a speculation upon the possible varieties of government. Accordingly, some later authors, like Mr. Godwin, in his *Political Justice*, have transmuted the whole question as to forms of social organization into a transcendent question of Justice; and how it can be fairly distributed in reconcilement with the necessities of a practical administration or the general prejudices of men. A state, a commonwealth, for example, is not simply a head or

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supremacy in relation to the other members of a political union; it is also itself a body amongst other co-equal bodies — one republic amongst other co-ordinate republics. War may happen to arise; taxation; and many other burdens. How are these to be distributed so as not to wound the fundamental principle of justice? They may be apportioned unequally. That would be injustice without a question. There may be scruples of conscience as to war, or contributions to war. That would be a more questionable case; but it would demand a consideration, and must be brought into harmony with the general theory of justice. For the supreme problem in such a speculation seems to be this — how to draw the greatest amount of strength from civil union; how to carry the powers of man to the greatest height of improvement, or to place him in the way of such improvement; and lastly, to do all this in reconciliation with the least possible infringement or suspension of man's individual rights. Under any view, therefore, of a commonwealth, nobody will object to the investigation of justice — as a proper basis for the whole edifice. But the student is dissatisfied with this Platonic introduction — 1st, as being too casual and occasional, consequently as not prefiguring in its course the order of those speculations which are to follow; 2dly, as too verbal and hair-splitting; 3dly, that it does not connect itself with what follows. It stands inertly and uselessly before the main disquisition as a sort of vestibule, but we are not made to see any transition from one to the other.

Meantime, the outline of this nominal introduction is what follows: — Socrates has received an invitation to a dinner party [δεῖπνον] from the son of Cephalus, a

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respectable citizen of Athens. This citizen, whose sons are grown up, is naturally himself advanced in years; and is led, therefore, reasonably to speak of old age. This he does in the tone of Cicero's Cato; contending that, upon the whole, it is made burdensome only by men's vices. But the value of his testimony is somewhat lowered by the fact, that he is moderately wealthy; and secondly, (which is more important,) that he is constitutionally moderate in his desires. Towards the close of his remarks, he says something on the use of riches in protecting us from injurious treatment — whether of our own towards others, or of others towards us.

This calls up Socrates, who takes occasion to put a general question as to the nature and definition of injustice. Cephalus declines the further prosecution of the dialogue for himself, but devolves it on his son. Some of the usual Attic word-sparring follows — of which this may be taken as a specimen: — a definition having been given of justice in a tentative way by Socrates himself, as though it might be that quality which restores to every one what we know to be his own; and the eldest son having adopted this definition as true, Socrates then opposes the cases in which, having borrowed a sword from a man, we should be required deliberately to replace it in the hands of the owner, knowing him to be mad. An angry interruption takes place from one of the company called Thrasymachus. This is appeased by the obliging behavior of Socrates. But it produces this effect upon what follows, that in fact from one illustration adduced by this Thrasymachus, the whole subsequent discipline arises. He, amongst other arts which he alleges in evidence of his

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views, cites that of government; and by a confusion between mere municipal law and the moral law of universal obligation, he contends that in every land that is just which promotes the interest or wishes of the governing power — be it king, nobles, or people as a body. Socrates opposes him by illustrations, such as Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, here made familiar to all the world, drawn from the arts of cooks, shepherds, pilots, &c.; and the book closes with a general defence of justice as requisite to the very existence of political states; since without some trust reposed in each other, wars would be endless, it is also presumable, that man, if generally unjust, would be less prosperous — as enjoying less of favor from the gods; and finally, that the mind in a temper of injustice, may be regarded as diseased; that it is less qualified for discharging its natural functions; and that thus, whether looking at bodies politic or individuals, the sum of happiness would be greatly diminished, if injustice were allowed to prevail.

BOOK THE SECOND.

In the beginning of this Book, two brothers, Glauco and Adeimantus, undertake the defence of injustice; but upon such arguments as have not even a colorable plausibility. They suppose the case that a man were possessed of the ring which conferred the privilege of invisibility; a fiction so multiplied in modern fairy tales, but which in the barren legends of the Pagan world was confined to the ring of Gyges. Armed with this advantage, they contend that every man would be unjust. But this is change only of fact. Next, how-

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ever, they suppose a case still more monstrous; viz. that moral distinctions should be so far confounded, as that a man practising all injustice, should pass for a man exquisitely just, and that a corresponding transfer of reputation should take place with regard to the just man: under such circumstances, they contend that every man would hasten to be unjust; and that the unjust would reap all the honors together with all the advantages of life. From all which they infer two things — First, that injustice is not valued for anything in its own nature or essence, but for its consequences; and secondly, that it is a combination of the weak many against the few who happen to be strong, which has invested justice with so much splendor by means of written laws. It seems strange that even for a momentary effect in conversation, such trivial sophistry as this could avail. Because, if in order to represent justice and injustice as masquerading amongst men, and losing their customary effects, or losing their corresponding impressions upon men's feelings, it is necessary first of all to suppose the whole realities of life confounded, and fantastic impossibilities established, no result at all from such premises could be worthy of attention; and, after all, the particular result supposed does not militate in any respect against the received notions as to moral distinctions. Injustice might certainly pass for justice; and as a second case, injustice having a bribe attached to it, might blind the moral sense to its true proportions of evil. But that will not prove that injustice can ever fascinate as injustice, or again, that it will ever prosper as regards its effects in that undisguised manifestation. If, to win upon men's esteem, it must privately wear the mask of

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justice; or if, to win upon men's practice, it must previously connect itself with artificial bounties of honor and preferment — all this is but another way of pronouncing an eulogy on justice. It is agreeable, however, to find, that these barren speculations are soon made to lead into questions more directly pertinent to the constitution of bodies politic. Socrates observes that large models are best fitted to exhibit the course of any action or process; and therefore he shifts the field of obstruction from the individual man, armed or not with the ring of Gyges, to regular commonwealths; in which it is, and in their relations to other commonwealths or to their own internal parts, that he proposes to answer these wild sophisms on the subject of justice as a moral obligation.

Socrates lays the original foundation of all political states in want or reciprocal necessity. And of human necessity the very primal shape is that which regards our livelihood. Here it is interesting to notice what is the *minimum* which Plato assumes for the 'outfit' (according to our parliamentary term) of social life. We moderns, for the mounting a colony or other social establishment, are obliged to assume at least five heads of expenditure; viz., 1, food; 2, shelter, or housing; 3, clothing; 4, warmth (or fuel); 5, light. But the two last we owe to our colder climate, and (which is a consequence of that) to our far more unequal distribution of daylight. As the ancients knew nothing of our very short days, so on the other hand they knew nothing, it is true, of our very long ones; and at first sight it might seem as if the one balanced the other. But it is not so; sunrise and sunset were far more nearly for the ancients, than they ever can be for nations in

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higher latitudes, coincident with the periods of retiring to rest and rising; and thus it was that they obtained another advantage — that of evading much call for fuel. Neither artificial light, nor artificial heat, were much needed in ancient times. Hot climates, often more than cold ones, require (it is true) artificial heat after sunset. But the ancient Greeks and Romans, *à fortiori* all nations less refined, were in bed by that time during the periods of their early simplicity, that *is*, during the periods of their poverty. The total expense in fuel amongst the Greeks, was upon a scale suited to ages in which fossil coal was an unknown staff of life: it was no more than met the simple demands of cookers, and of severe winters; these, it is true, even in Spain, nay in Syria, are sometimes accompanied with heavy storms of snow.* But, on the other hand, the winters are short; and even so far north in Italy as Milan, the season of genial spring, and of luxuriant flowers, often commences in February. In contrast with our five requisitions of northern latitudes, which, as implying a higher (because a more provident) scale of existence, have a philosophic value, it is interesting to find Plato, under the person of Socrates, requiring only three; viz. food, clothes, and lodging. The arts, therefore, which he presumes requisite for establishing a city, are four: one occupied with the culture of the ground; one with the building of habitations; and two, ministerial to the adorning, or at least to the protecting of the person. The ploughman before all others for our food — in the second rank,

* '*Storms of snow.*' — For an instance of a very critical fall of snow near Jerusalem not long before our Saviour's time, see Josephus.

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the mason for raising dwelling-houses — and in the last place, the weaver combined with the shoemaker for the manufacturing our dress; these four artists, says Plato, are the very *minimum* establishment on which a city or a colony can begin to move. But a very few steps will bring us, he remarks, to a call for further arts; in particular, it will soon be found that it is a sad waste of time for any of the four already mentioned to be interrupted by the necessity of making their several tools and implements. A fifth artist will therefore be found necessary, in the character of tool-maker, in common with all the rest. A sixth and a seventh will be soon called for, in the character of shepherds and herdsmen; for if sheep and oxen are not indispensable as food, they are so as furnishing the leather required by the shoemaker. And lastly, merchants, for the purpose of exporting the surplus products, and of importing such as are defective, together with resident dealers in all articles of household use are contemplated as completing the establishment. The gradual accession of luxuries in every class is next presumed as what would follow in general, but would not be allowed in Plato's republic; and, as the increase of population will require additional territory, (though it is an oversight not to have assigned from the first the quantity of soil occupied, and the circumstances of position in regard to neighbors,) this will make an opening for war; and that again for a regular class of men dedicated to the arts of attack and defence. It is singular that Plato should thus arbitrarily lay his ground of war in aggressive principles — because, if he assumed his territory spacious enough, and the expansion of population as slow as it really was in

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Greece, the case in which he finally plants his necessity for war might not occur until the new state should be rich enough to find, in the difficulty supposed, a cause for throwing off colonies, rather than for unprovoked attacks on neighboring states. It is remarkable, however, that Plato, a pagan writer, makes war a subsequent and ministerial phenomenon in civil societies; whereas Hobbes, nominally a Christian, makes the belligerent condition to be that transcendent and original condition of man, out of which society itself arose.

War, however, has begun; and soldiers, as a mercenary class, are henceforwards required. Upon which Plato unfolds his ideas as to the proper qualifications of a soldier. Of course he insists upon courage, athletic powers of body in general, (qualifications so pre-eminently required before the invention of fire-arms,*) and especially upon the power of speed and agility. But it is singular that in describing the temperament likely to argue courage, he insists upon irascibility; whereas, with far more truth of philosophy, his pupil Aristotle, in after years, speaks contemptuously of all courage founded upon anger, as generally spurious in its nature, and liable to the same suspicion as that which is founded upon intoxication.

It is upon this occasion, and in connection with the

* '*Fire-arms.*' — It is very true that the essential principle distinguishing fire-arms, viz., their application to distant warfare making men independent of personal strength, was found in slingers and archers. But these arms of the martial service were always in some disrepute in Greece; even Hercules (in the *Herc. Furens*) is described by Euripides as subject to ridicule and reproach from Lycus, his enemy, on account of his having resorted to archery.

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education of this state soldiery, as a professional class needing to be trained expressly for a life of adventurous service, and of hardship, that Plato introduces his celebrated doctrine imputing mischievous falsehood to the poets. The mythology of paganism, it is needless to say, represented the gods under characters the most hideous and disgusting. But the main circumstances in these representations, according to Plato, are mere fictions of Hesiod and of Homer. Strange, indeed, that Plato should ascribe to any poets whatever, so prodigious a power as that of having created a national religion. For the religion of paganism was not something independent of the mythology. It was wholly involved in the mythology. Take away the mythologic legends, and you take away all the objects of worship. The characteristics by which Latona is distinguished from Ceres, Apollo from Mercury, Diana from Minerva, Hebe from Aurora, all vanish, and leave mere nonentities, if the traditional circumstance of their theogony and history is laid aside as fabulous. Besides, if this could be surmounted, and if Plato could account for all the tribes of Hellas having adopted what he supposes to be the reveries of two solitary poets, how could he account for the general argument in these traditions of other distant nations, who never heard so much as the names of the two Greek poets, nor could have read them if they had? The whole speculation is like too many in Plato — without a shadow of coherency; and at every angle presenting some fresh incongruity. The fact really was, that the human intellect had been for some time outgrowing its foul religions; clamorously it began to demand some change; but how little it was able to effect that change

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for itself, is evident from no example more than that of Plato; for he, whilst dismissing as fables some of the grosser monstrosities which the Pagan pantheon offered, loaded in effect that deity, whom he made a concurrent party to his own schemes for man, with vile qualities, quite as degrading as any which he removed; and in effect so much the worse, as regarded the result, because, wanting the childish monstrosities of the mythologic legends, they had no benefit from any allegoric interpretations in the background. Thus cruelty and sensuality, if they happen to fall in with a pagan philosopher's notions of state utility, instantly assume a place in his theories; and thence is transferred upon the deities, who are supposed to sanction this system, a far deeper taint of moral pollution than that which, being connected with extravagant or ludicrous tales, might provoke an enlightened mind to reject it with incredulity, or receive it as symbolic. Meantime, it is remarkable that Plato should connect this reform in education specially with his soldiers; and still more so, when we understand his reason. It was apparently on two grounds that he fancied the pagan superstitions injurious to a class of men whom it was important to keep clear of panics. First, on an argument derived from the Hades of the poets, Plato believed the modes of punishment exhibited by these poets to be too alarming, and likely to check by intimidation that career of violence which apparently he thinks requisite in a soldier. Surely he might have spared his anxiety; for if, in any quarter of its barren superstitions, paganism betrayed its impoverished fancy, it was in its pictures of Tartarus, where, besides that the several cases are, 1st, so scanty, and applied only to monstrous offences;

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and 2d, so ludicrous, they are, 3d, all of them ineffectual for terror, were it only by the general impression conveyed that they are allegoric, and meant to be allegoric. Secondly, Plato seems to have had in his thoughts those panic terrors which sometimes arose from the belief that superior beings suddenly revealed themselves in strange shapes; — both in Roman and Grecian experience, these fancied revelations had produced unexpected victories, but also unexpected flights. He argues, accordingly, against the possibility of a god adopting any metamorphosis; but upon the weak scholastic argument, weaker than a cobweb to any superstitious heart, that a celestial being would not leave a better state for a worse. How visionary to suppose that any mind previously inclined to shadowy terrors, and under the operation of solitude, of awful silence, and of wild grotesque scenery in forests or mountains, would be charmed into sudden courage by an *à priori* little conundrum of the logic school! Oh! philosopher, laid by the side of a simple-hearted primitive Christian, what a fool dost thou appear! And after all, if such evils arose from familiarity with the poets, and on that account the soldiery was to be secluded from all such reading — how were they to be preserved from contagion of general conversation with their fellow-citizens? Or, again, on foreign expeditions, how were they to be sequestered from such traditions as were generally current, and were everywhere made the subject of dinner recitations, or prelections or of national music?

In the midst of these impracticable solicitudes for the welfare of his soldiers, Plato does not overlook the probability that men trained to violence may mutiny,

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and (being consciously the sole depositaries of the public weapons and skill, as well as originally selected for superior promise of strength) may happen to combine, and to turn their arms against their fellow-citizens. It is painful to see so grave a danger dismissed so carelessly — *tantamne rem tam negligenter?* The sole provision which Plato makes against the formidable danger, is by moral precepts, impressing on the soldier kindness and affability to those whom it was his professional mission to protect. But such mere sanctions of decorum or usage — how weak must they be found to protect any institution merely human, against a strong interest moving in an adverse direction! The institutions of Romulus, in a simple and credulous age, had the consecration (perhaps not imaginary, but, beyond a doubt, universally believed) of heaven itself — a real sanctity guarded the institutions of Rome, which yet rocked and quaked for centuries under the conflicting interests of the citizens. But a philosopher's republic, in an age of philosophy and free-thinking, must repose upon human securities. Show any order of men a strong change setting in upon the current of their civil interests, and they will soon be led to see a corresponding change in their duties. Not to mention that the sense of duty must be weak at all times amongst men whom Plato supposes expressly trained to acts of violence, whom he seeks to wean from the compunction of religion, and whose very service and profession had its first origin in acknowledged rapacity. Thus, by express institution of Plato, and by his own forecasting, had the soldiery arisen. Thus had the storm been called up; and it would be too late to bid it wheel this way or

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that, after its power had been consciously developed, and the principles which should control this power were found to be nothing more than the ancient intentions of a theoretic founder, or the particular interests of a favored class. Besides, it will be seen further on, that the soldiers are placed under peculiar disadvantages — they are to possess nothing; and thus, in addition to the strong temptation of conscious power, they are furnished with a second temptation in their painful poverty, contrasted with the comparative wealth of the cowardly citizens whom they protect; and finally, with a third, (which also furnished an excuse,) in the feeling that they are an injured class.

BOOK THE THIRD.

Plato is neither methodic nor systematic; he has neither that sort of order which respects the connection of what he teaches as a thing to be understood, nor that which respects its connection as a thing which is to be realized — neither that which concerns the *ratio cognoscendi*, (to adopt a great distinction revived by Leibnitz from the schoolmen,) nor that, on the other hand, which regards the *ratio essendi*. This last neglect he could not have designed; the other perhaps he did. And the very form of dialogue or conversations was probably adopted to intimate as much. Be that as it may, we look in vain for any such distribution of the subject as should justify the modern division into separate books. The loose order of colloquial discussion, sometimes going back, sometimes leaping forward with impatient anticipation, and then again thoughtfully resuming a topic insufficiently examined — such is the law of succession by which

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the general theme is slowly advanced, and its particular heads are casually unfolded.

Accordingly, in this third book the subject of the soldiery is resumed; and the proper education for that main column of the state, on which its very existence is openly founded, engages the more circumstantial attention of Plato. The leading object kept in view, as regards the mental discipline, is to brace the mind against fear. And here, again, Plato comes back upon the poets, whom he taxes with arts of emasculation, in reference to the hardy courage which his system demands. He distributes the poets into the two great classes of narrative and dramatic; those who speak directly in their own person, like Homer; and those who utter their sentiments as ventriloquists, throwing their voice first upon this character of a drama, next upon that. It is difficult to see what purpose Plato had in this distribution; but it is highly interesting to us of this day, because we might otherwise have supposed that, upon a point of delicacy, Plato had forborne to involve in his censure of the poets that body of great dramatists, so recently drawn into existence, and of whom two at least (Euripides and Aristophanes) were in part of their lives contemporary with himself. He does, however, expressly notice them; and, what is more to the purpose, he applies to them his heaviest censure: though on what principle, is somewhat obscure. The nominal reason for his anger is — that they proceed by means of imitation; and that even mimetically to represent woman, has the effect of transfusing effeminacy, by some unexplained process, into the manners of the imitator. Now, really, this at the best would be too

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fantastic. But when we reflect on the great tragic poets of Greece, and consider that in the midst of pagan darkness the only rays of moral light are to be found in THEM, and that Milton, almost a bigot, as being a Puritan, yet with that exalted standard of scriptural truth which he carried forever in his mind, refers to these poets, and the great theatre which they founded, for the next best thing to Christian teaching — we feel our hearts alienated from Plato. But when we also contrast with this Greek scenical morality and its occasional elevation, the brutal, sensual, and cruel principles which we sometimes find in Plato himself, (more frequently indeed, and more outrageously, than in any other pagan author of eminence,) — it cannot be thought unreasonable that our alienation should amount to disgust. Euripides was truly a great man, struggling for a higher light than he could find. Plato was a thorough Greek, satisfied, so far as ethics were concerned, with the light which existed, nor dreaming of anything higher. And, with respect to the Greek religion, Euripides forestalled, by twenty years, all that Plato has said; we have his words to this day, and they are much more impressive than Plato's; and probably these very words of Euripides first suggested to Plato the doctrine which he so maliciously directs in this place against the very poets as a body, who, through one of their number, first gave currency to such a bold speculation, and first tried as *enfans perdus*, (or the leaders of a forlorn hope,) whether the timid superstition of the Athenians, and the fanaticism founded on their fear, would tolerate such innovations.

After this second sentence of exile against the poets

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— which we cannot but secretly trace to the jealousy of Plato, armed against that section of the Athenian *literati* most in the public favor — we are carried forward to the music of the Greeks. The soldiery are excluded from all acquaintance with any but the austerer modes. But as this is a subject still mysterious even to those who come armed with the knowledge of music as a science, and as no more than a general caution is given, this topic is not one of those which we are called on to discuss.

So slight was the Grecian circuit of education, and especially where mathematics happened to be excluded, that poetry and music apparently bound the practical encyclopædia of Plato. From the mind, therefore, he passes to the physical education. And here we find two leading cautions, of which one, at least, is built on more accurate observation of medical truths than we should have expected in the age of Plato. The first will, perhaps, not much strike the reader, for it expresses only the stern injunction upon every soldier of that temperance as to strong liquors, which in our days has descended (with what permanence we fear to ask) amongst the very lowest and most suffering of human beings. It is, however, creditable to Plato, that he should have perceived the mischievous operation of inebriation upon the health and strength; for in his age, the evil of such a practice was chiefly thrown upon its moral effects, — the indecorums which it caused, the quarrels, the murderous contests, the lasting alienations, and the perilous breaches of confidence. There was little general sense of any evil in wine as a relaxer of the bodily system; as, on the other hand, neither then

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nor in our days is there any just appreciation of the subsidiary benefits which sometimes arise from strong liquors, or at least the clamorous call for such liquors, in cold climates where the diet is cold and watery. Edmund Burke, as we remember, in his enlarged wisdom did not overlook this case; we individually have seen too large a series of cases to doubt the fact — that in vast cities, wherever the diet of poor families happens to be thrown too much upon mere watery broths, it is a pure instinct of nature, and often a very salutary instinct, which forces them into a compensatory stimulus of alcohol. The same natural instinct for strong liquor as a partial relief, is said to be prompted by scrofula. In a Grecian climate, and with a limited population, this anomalous use of wine was not requisite; and for the soldiery, enjoying a select diet, it could least of all be needful. Plato shows his good sense, therefore, as well as the accuracy of his observation, in forbidding it. For he notices one effect which invariably follows from the addiction to strong liquors, even where as yet they have not mastered the constitutional vigor; viz. their tendency to produce a morbid sensibility to cold. We ourselves have seen a large party of stout men travelling on a morning of intense severity. Amongst the whole number, nine or ten, there were two only who did not occasionally shiver, or express some unpleasant feeling connected with the cold; and these two were the sole water-drinkers of the party. The other caution of Plato shows even more accuracy of attention; and it is completely verified by modern experience. He is naturally anxious that the diet of the soldiery should be simple and wholesome. Now

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it was almost certain that those who reflected on the final object he had in view, would at once interpret his meaning as pointing to the diet of professional athletes. These men for Greece were the forerunners of the Roman gladiators; as the Greek hippodrome bisected itself into the Roman circus and amphitheatre. And as Plato's object was to secure the means of unusual strength, what more natural than to consult the experience of those who, having long had the very same end, must by this time have accumulated a large science of the appropriate means? Now, on closer examination, Plato perceived that the end was *not* the same. The gladiatorial schools had before them some day, well known and immutable, of public festivities and games, against which they were to prepare their maximum of bodily power. By the modern and by the ancient system of training, it is notorious that this preparatory discipline can be calculated to a nicety. When the 'fancy' was in favor amongst ourselves, the pugilist, after entering into any legal engagement, under strong penalties, to fight on a day assigned, went into training about six weeks previously; and by the appointed time he had, through diet, exercise, sleep, all nicely adjusted to the rules of this discipline, brought up his muscular strength and his wind to the summit of what his constitution allowed. Now, certainly, in a general view, the purpose of the Platonic soldier was the same, but with this important difference — that his fighting condition was needed not on one or two days consecutively, but on many days, and not against a day punctually assignable, but against a season or period perhaps of months, quite indeterminate as to its beginning, end, or duration. This one

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difference made the whole difference; for both ancient and modern training concur in these two remarkable facts — 1st. That a condition of physical power thus preternaturally produced cannot be maintained, but that uniformly a very rapid relapse follows to a condition of debility. Like the stone of Sisyphus, the more painfully and with unnatural effort a resisting object has been rolled up to a high summit, with so much the more thundering violence does it run back. The state was too intense not to be succeeded by sudden recoil. 2dly. It has been found that these spasms of preternatural tension are not without danger: apoplexes, ruptures of large blood-vessels, and other modes of sudden death, are apt to follow from the perilous tampering with the exquisite machinery of nature. This also had been the experience of Greece. Time, as a great element in all powerful changes, must be allowed in order to secure their safety. Plato, therefore, lays down as a great law for the physical discipline, that in no part of its elements, whether diet, exercise, abstinence, or gymnastic feats of strength and address, shall the ritual for the soldiers borrow anything from the schools of the *athletæ*.

In the remaining part of this Book, we have some organic arrangements proposed. First, as to the local situation — a strong military position is requisite for the soldiery, and ground must therefore be selected originally which offers this advantage. The position is to be such as may at once resist a foreign enemy and *command the other orders in the state*. Upon this ground, a body of lodgings is to be built; and in these lodgings a single regard is prescribed to the purpose in view. Direct utility and convenience, without osten-

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tation, are to preside in the distribution of the parts and in the architectural style; the buildings are, in fact, to unite at once the uses of a barrack and a fortress.

Next, as this fortress, distinct from the other parts of the city, when connected with arms, and the use of arms, and regular discipline, and select qualities of body, cannot but throw vast power into the hands of the soldiery, so that from being guardians of the city, (as by direct title they are,) they might easily become its oppressors and pillagers, universally the soldiers are to be incapable by law of holding any property whatever, without regard to quality, without regard to tenure. They can inherit nothing; they can possess nothing; neither gold nor silver, metals which must not even find an entrance into their dwellings under pretence of custody; nor land; nor any other article; nor, finally, must they exercise a trade.

Thirdly, the administration of affairs, the executive power, and the supreme rank, are vested in the persons of the highest military officers — those who rise to that station by seniority and by extraordinary merit. This is very vaguely developed; but enough exists to show that the form of polity would be a martial aristocracy, a qualified '*stratocracy*.' In this state, it is not so much true that an opening or a temptation is offered to a martial tyranny, as that, in fact, such a tyranny is planted and rooted from the first with all the organs of administration at its disposal.

Lastly, in what way is the succession to be regulated through the several ranks and functions of the state? Not exactly, or under positive settlement, by *castes*, or an Egyptian succession of a son to his father's trade,

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&c. This is denounced in the sense of an unconditional or unbending system; for it is admitted that fathers of talent may have incompetent sons, and stupid fathers may have sons of brilliant promise. But, on the whole, it seems to be assumed that, amongst the highest, or martial order, the care dedicated to the selection of the parents will ensure children of similar excellence,

'Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis,'

and that amongst the artisans one average level of mediocrity will usually prevail; in which case, the advantage of personal training to the art, under a domestic tutor who never leaves him, must give such a bias to the children of the citizens for their several pursuits, as will justify the principle of hereditary succession. Still, in any case where this expectation fails, a door is constantly kept open for meeting any unusual indication of nature, by corresponding changes in the destiny of the young people. Nature, therefore, in the last resort, will regulate the succession, since the law interposes no further than in confirmation of that order in the succession which it is presumed that nature will have settled by clear expressions of fitness. But in whatever case nature indicates determinately some different predisposition in the individual, then the law gives way; for, says Plato, with emphasis, 'the paramount object in my commonwealth is — that every human creature should find his proper level, and every man settle into that place for which his natural qualities have fitted him.'

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These last words are not a mere flourish of rhetoric. It is, according to Plato's view, the very distinguishing feature in his polity, that each man occupies his own natural place. Accordingly, it is the business of this Book to favor that view by a sort of fanciful analogy between what we in modern times call the four cardinal virtues, and the four capital varieties of state polity, and also between these virtues and the constituent order in a community. This, however, may be looked upon as no step in advance towards the development of his own Republic, but rather as a halt for the purpose of looking back upon what has been already developed.

The cardinal virtues, as we see them adopted nearly four hundred years after Plato by Cicero, are prudence, fortitude, temperance and justice. The first will find its illustration according to Plato, in the governing part of a state; the second in the defending part, or the military; the third in the relation between all the parts; but the fourth has its essence in assigning to every individual, and to every order, the appropriate right, whether that be property, duty, function, or rank. Other states, therefore, present some analogy to the three first virtues, according to the predominant object which they pursue. But his own, as Plato contends, is a model analogous to the very highest of the virtues, or justice; for that in this state only the object is kept up, as a transcendent object, of suffering no man to assume functions by mere inheritance, but to every individual assigning that office and station for which nature seems to have prepared his qualifications.

This principle, so broadly expressed, would seem to

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require more frequent disturbances in the series of hereditary employments than Plato had contemplated in his last Book. Accordingly, he again acknowledges the importance of vigilantly reviewing the several qualifications of the citizens. The rest of the Book is chiefly occupied with a psychological inquiry into a problem sometimes discussed in modern times, (but thoroughly alien to the political problem of Plato;) viz. whether, upon dividing the internal constitution of man into three elements — the irascible passions, the appetites of desire, and the rational principle — we are warranted in supposing three separate substances or hypostases in the human system, or merely three separate offices of some common substance: whether, in short, these differences are organic or simply functional. But, besides that the discussion is both obscure and conducted by scholastic hair-splitting, it has too slight a relation to the main theme before us, to justify our digressing for what is so little interesting.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

At this point of the conversation, Adeimantus, at the suggestion of another person, recalls Socrates to the consideration of that foul blot upon his theory which concerns the matrimonial connections of the army. Not only were these to commence in a principle of unmitigated sensuality — selection of wives by public, not by individual choice, and with a single reference to physical qualities of strength, size, agility — but, which riveted the brutal tendencies of such a law, the wives, if wives they could be called, and the children that might arise from such promiscuous connections, were to be held the common property of the order.

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Ties of any separate kindness, or affection for this woman or for that child, were forbidden as a species of treason; and if (as in rare cases might happen) after all they should arise, the parties to such holy, but, Platonically speaking, such criminal feelings, must conceal them from all the world — must cherish them as a secret cancer at the heart, or as a martyrdom repeated in every hour. We represent marriages under the beautiful idea of unions. But these Platonic marriages would be the foulest dispersions of the nuptial sanctities. We call them self-dedications of one human creature to another, through the one sole means by which nature has made it possible for any exclusive dedication to be effected. But these Platonic marriages would be a daily renovation of disloyalty, revolt, and mutual abjuration. We, from human society, transfer a reflex of human charities upon inferior natures, when we see the roe-deer, for instance, gathering not into herds and communities like their larger brethren, the fallow-deer or the gigantic red-deer, but into families — two parents everywhere followed by their own fawns, loving and beloved. Plato, from the brutal world, and from that aspect of the brutal world in which it is most brutal, transfers a feature of savage gregariousness which would ultimately disorganize as much as it would immediately degrade. In fact, the mere feuds of jealousy, frantic hatred, and competitions of authority, growing out of such an institution, would break up the cohesion of Plato's republic within seven years. We all know of such institutions as actually realized; one case of former ages is recorded by Cæsar, Strabo, &c.; another of the present day exists amongst the ranges of the Himalaya, and has

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been brought by the course of our growing empire within British control. But they are, and have been, connected with the most abject condition in other respects; and probably it would be found, if such societies were not merely traversed by the glasses of philosophers in one stage of their existence, but steadily watched through a succession of generations, that it is their very necessity rapidly to decay, either by absorption into more powerful societies, built on sounder principles, or by inevitable self-extinction. Certain it is, that a society so constituted through *all* its orders, could breed no conservative or renovating impulses, since all motives of shame, glory, emulation, would operate upon a system untuned, or pitched in a far lower key, wherever sexual love and the tenderness of exclusive preferences were forbidden by law.

Adeimantus, by thus calling for a revision of a principle so revolting, impersonates to the reader his own feelings. He, like the young Athenian, is anxious to find himself in sympathy with one reputed to be so great a philosopher; or at least, he is unwilling to suppose himself so immeasurably removed from sympathy. Still less can he concede, or even suspend, his own principles in a point which does not concern taste, or refinement of feeling, or transitory modes of decorum, or even the deduction of logic; in all these points, however rudely shocked, he would, in modest submission to a great name, have consented to suppose himself wrong. But this scruple belongs to no such faculty of taste, or judgment, or reasoning; it belongs to the primary conscience. It belongs to a region in which no hypothetic assumptions for the sake of argument, no provisional concessions, no neutralizing com-

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promises, are ever possible. By two tests is man raised above the brutes; 1st, As a being capable of religion, (which presupposes him a being endowed with reason;) 2dly, As a being capable of marriage. And effectually both capacities are thus far defeated by Plato — that both have a worm, a principle of corrosion, introduced into their several tenures. He does not, indeed, formally destroy religion; he supposes himself even to purify it; but by tearing away as impostures those legends in which, for a pagan, the effectual truth of the pagan mythology, as a revelation of power, had its origin and its residence, he would have shattered it as an agency or a sanction operating on men's oaths, &c. He does not absolutely abolish marriage, but by limiting its possibility, (and how? Under two restrictions, the most insidious that can be imagined, totally abolishing it for the most honored order of his citizens, viz. — the military order; and abolishing it for those men and women whom nature had previously most adorned with her external gifts,) he does his utmost to degrade marriage, even so far as it is tolerated. Whether he designed it or not, marriage is now no longer a privilege, a reward, a decoration. On the contrary, *not* to be married, is a silent proclamation that you are amongst the select children of the state — honored by your fellow-citizens as one of their defenders — admired by the female half of the society as dedicated to a service of danger — marked out universally by the public zeal as one who possesses a physical superiority to other men — lastly, pointed out to foreigners for distinction, as belonging to a privileged class. *Are you married?* would be a question from which every man travelling abroad would

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shrink, unless he could say —*No.* It would be asking, in effect — Are you of the inferior classes, a subaltern commanded by others, or a noble? And the result would be, that, like poverty (not pauperism, but indigence or scanty means) at this day, marriage would still have its true, peculiar and secret blessings, but, like poverty again, it would not flourish in the world's esteem; and, like that, it would prompt a system of efforts and of opinions tending universally in the very opposite direction.

Feeling — but, as a pagan, feeling not very profoundly — these truths, Adeimantus calls for explanations (secretly expecting modifications) of this offensive doctrine. Socrates, however, (that is, Plato,) offers none but such as are re-affirmations of the doctrine in other words, and with some little expansion of its details. The women selected as wives in these military marriages, are to be partners with the men in martial labors. This unsexual distinction will require an unsexual training. It is, therefore, one derivative law in Plato's Republic, that a certain proportion of the young girls are to receive a masculine education, not merely assimilated to that of the men, but by personal association of both sexes in the same *palæstra*, identical with that, and going on concurrently.

To this there are two objections anticipated.

1st. That, as the gymnastic exercises of the ancients were performed in a state of nudity, (to which fact, combined with the vast variety of marbles easily worked by Grecian tools, some people have ascribed the premature excellence in Greece of the plastic

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arts,) such a personal exposure would be very trying to female modesty, and revolting to masculine sensibilities. Perhaps no one passage in the whole works of Plato so powerfully reveals his visionary state of disregard to the *actual* in human nature, and his contempt of human instincts, as this horrible transition (so abrupt and so total) from the superstitious reserve * of Grecian society, combined, as in this place it is, with levity so perfect. Plato repudiates this scruple with something like contempt. He contends that it is all custom and use which regulate such feelings, and that a new training made operative, will soon generate a new standard of propriety. Now, with our better views on such points, a plain man would tell the philosopher, that although use, no doubt, will reconcile us to much, still, after all, a better and a worse in such things does exist, previously to *any* use at all, one way or the other; and that it is the

* '*Superstitious reserve of Greece.*' The possibility, however, of this Platonic reverie as an idealism, together with the known practice of Sparta as a reality, are interesting as a commentary on the real tendencies of that Oriental seclusion and spurious delicacy imposed upon women, which finally died away in the Roman system of manners; by what steps, it would be very instructive to trace. Meantime, this much is evident — that precisely in a land where this morbid delicacy was enforced upon women, precisely in that land (the only one in such circumstances that ever reached an intellectual civilization) where women were abridged in their liberty, men in their social refinement, the human race in its dignity, by the false requisitions as to seclusion, and by a delicacy spurious, hollow, and sensual, precisely there the other extreme was possible, of forcing upon women the most profligate exposure, and compelling them, amidst tears and shame, to trample on the very instincts of female dignity. So reconcilable are extremes, when the earliest extreme is laid in the unnatural.

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business of philosophy to ascertain this better and worse, *per se*, so as afterwards to apply the best gravitation of this moral agency, called custom, in a way to uphold a known benefit, not to waste it upon a doubtful one, still less upon one which, to the first guiding sensibilities of man, appears dangerous and shocking. If, hereafter, in these martial women, Plato should, under any dilemma, have to rely upon feminine qualities of delicacy or tenderness, he might happen to find that, with the characteristic and sexual qualities of his women, he has uprooted all the rest of their distinguishing graces; that for a single purpose, arbitrary even in *his* system, he had sacrificed a power that could not be replaced. All this, however, is dismissed as a trivial scruple.

2dly. There is another scruple, however, which weighs more heavily with Plato, and receives a more pointed answer. The objection to a female soldier or a gladiatrix might be applied on a far different principle — not to what *seems*, but to what actually *is* — not by moral sentiment, but by physiology. Habit might make us callous to the spectacle of unfeminine exposures; but habit cannot create qualities of muscular strength, hardihood, or patient endurance, where nature has denied them. These qualities may be improved, certainly in women, as they may in men; but still, as the improved woman in her athletic character must still be compared with the improved man, the scale, the proportions of difference, will be kept at the old level. And thus the old prejudice — that women are not meant (because not fitted by nature) for warlike tasks — will revolve upon us in the shape of a philosophic truth.

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To a certain extent, Plato indirectly admits this, for (as will be seen) practically he allows for it in his subsequent institutions. But he restricts the principle of female inaptitude for war by the following suggestion: — The present broad distribution of the human species, according to which courage and the want of courage — muscular strength and weakness — are made to coincide with mere sexual distinctions, he rejects as false — not groundless — for there is a perceptible tendency to that difference — but still false for ordinary purposes. It may have a popular truth. But here, when the question is about philosophic possibilities and extreme ideals, he insists upon substituting for this popular generality a more severe valuation of the known facts. He proposes, therefore, to divide the human race upon another principle. Men, though it is the characteristic tendency of their sex to be courageous, are not all courageous; men, though sexually it is their tendency to be strong, are not all strong: many are so; but some, in the other extreme, are both timid and feeble: others, again, present us with a compromise between both extremes. By a parity of logic, women, though sexually and constitutionally unwarlike, pass through the same graduated range; upon which scale, the middle qualities in *them* may answer to the lower qualities in the other sex — the higher to the middle. It is possible, therefore, to make a selection amongst the entire female population, of such as are fitted to take their share in garrison duty, in the duty of military posts or of sentries, and even, to a certain extent, in the extreme labors of the field. Plato countenances the belief that, allowing for the difference in muscular

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power of women, considered as animals, (a mere difference of degree,) there is no essential difference, as to power and capacities, between the human male and the female. Considering the splendor of his name, (weighty we cannot call a man's authority whom so few profess to have read, but *imposing* at the least,) it is astonishing that in the agitation stirred by the modern brawlers, from Mary Wollstonecraft downwards, in behalf of female pretensions to power, no more use should have been drawn from the disinterested sanction of Plato to these wild innovations. However, it will strike many, that even out of that one inferiority conceded by Plato, taken in connection with the frequent dependencies of wives and mothers upon human forbearance and human aids, in a way irreconcilable with war, those inferences might be forced one after one, which would soon restore (as a direct logical consequence) that state of female dependency, which at present nature and providence so beautifully accomplish through the gentlest of human feelings. Even Plato is obliged in practice to allow rather more on account of his one sole concession than his promises would have warranted; for he stipulates that these young gladiatrices and other figurantes in the *palæstra*, shall not be put upon difficult or dangerous trials; living in our day, he would have introduced into H. M.'s navy a class of midshipwomen; but would have exempted them, we presume, from all the night watches, and from going aloft. This, however, might have been mere consideration for the tenderness of youth. But again, in mature life, though he orders that the wives and the children shall march with the armed force to the seat of the

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campaign, and on the day of battle shall make their appearance in the rear, (an unpleasant arrangement in our day of flying artillery and rocket brigade,) he does not insist on their mixing in the *mêlée*. Their influence with the fighting division of the army, is to lie in their visible presence. But surely at this point, Plato overlooked the elaborate depression of that influence which his own system had been nursing. Personal presence of near female relations, whether in storms at sea, or in battles, has always been supposed to work more mischief by distracting the commander's attention, than good by reminding him of his domestic ties. And since the loss of an East Indiaman, (the Halsewell,) about sixty years ago, in part ascribed to the presence of the captain's daughter, the rules of the British service, we believe, have circumscribed the possibility of such very doubtful influences. But, in Plato's Republic, the influences must have been much more equivocal. A number of women and a number of children are supposed to be ranged on an eminence in the background. The women were undoubtedly, or had been, mothers: but to which of the children individually, and whether to any living child, was beyond their power to guess. Giving the fact that any child to which, in former years, they might give birth, were still in existence, then probably that child would be found amongst the young column of battle-gazers on the ground. But, as to the men, even this conditional knowledge is impossible. Multiplied precautions have been taken, that it may be impossible. From the moment of birth the child has been removed to an establishment where the sternest measures are enforced to confound it beyond all power of recogni-

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tion with the crowd of previous children. The object is to place a bar between this recognition and everybody; the mother and all others alike. Can a cup of water be recovered when poured off into the Danube? Equally impossible, if Plato's intentions are fulfilled, to recover traces of identification with respect to any one of the public children. The public family, therefore, of wives and children are present, but with what probable result upon the sensibilities of the men, we leave the reader to determine, when we have put him in possession of Plato's motive to all this unnatural interference with human affections. Why had he from the first applied so large a body of power (wasted power, if not requisite) to the suppression of what most legislators would look to for their highest resources? It seems bad mechanics — to convert *that* into a resistance, requiring vast expense of engineering to overcome it, which might obviously have been treated as a power of the first magnitude for overcoming other and inevitable resistance. Strong reasons must be brought for such an inversion of the ordinary procedure. What are they in Plato's system? Simply this — that from individual marriages and separate children, not only many feuds arise between man and man, family and family; a private interest is established as against other private interests; but also a private parental interest is established in another sense, namely, against the public; a parental or family interest, differing from the public state interest, and often enough in mortal hostility to that interest.

Be it so: a danger, a pressure, is exposed by Plato in one direction — confronted by what we Christians

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should think a far heavier in another; or, to express it more strictly, a gain is sought in one direction — which gain seems to us fatally compensated by loss in another. But *that* is part of Plato's theory — *that* he confronts with his eyes open — and we are not to oppose them in mere logic, because it is one of the postulates in effect on which his system rests. But we have a right to demand consistency: and, when Plato brings the wives and children on the field of battle in order to sustain the general sentiment of patriotism, he is virtually depending upon that power which he had previously renounced; he is throwing the weight of his reliance upon a providential arrangement which he had tossed aside not as useless merely, but as vicious; he is clinging in his distress to those sanctities, conjugal and parental, of which he had said in his self-confidence — 'Behold! I will give you something better.' And tolerably sure we are, that, had Plato prosecuted the details of his theory into more of their circumstantialities, or had he been placed under the torture of a close polemic review, he would have been found reviving for its uses, and for its solution of many perplexities in practice, that very basis of female honor and modesty, which by his practice and by his professions he has so labored earnestly to destroy.

The reader will arrive probably at a pretty fixed opinion as to the service for state purposes likely to arise from this exhibition of a clamorous nursery, children and nurses, upon the field of battle. As a flag, banner, or ensign, if Plato could in any way contrive that the army should regard the nursery militant as the sacred depository of their martial honor, then it is probable that men would fight desperately for *that*

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considered as a trophy, which they regarded but lightly as a household memorial. But this would be unattainable. Even with us, and our profounder Christian feelings, the women attendant upon an army (who, in the Thirty Years' War, on the Catholic side often amounted to another army) have never been elevated into a 'pignus sanctum militiæ.' The privates and subaltern officers might readily have come into such a view; but the commander-in-chief with his staff would have set their faces against so dangerous a principle — it would have fettered the movements of an army too much; and in most cases would defeat any sudden manœuvres in the presence of an enemy. Mere justice to human powers demands that the point of honor for armies, or for sections of armies, (such as regiments, &c.) should be placed in that which can move concurrently with the main body, no matter for roads, weather, want of provisions, or any other circumstances. Even artillery, therefore, though a subject of martial jealousy, is not made absolutely coincident with the point of martial honor. And another consideration is this — that not only no object ever can be raised into that mode of dignity when all members of the army are not parties to the consecration, but even the enemy must be a party to this act. Accordingly, the sanctity of the flag, as the national honor in a symbolic form confided to a particular regiment, is an inheritance transmitted downwards through many generations of every nation in Christendom. Now, if Plato's republic were even able to translate the point of honor (which for the Greeks consisted in a ritual celebration of the battle by sacrifices, together with a choral chant, and also in the right to erect a frail me-

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morial of the victory*) to the capture or preservation of the women and children, — still this change could not be accomplished; for the neighboring states would not be persuaded to terms of 'reciprocity,' as the modern economists phrase it. What! not if they also were Platonic states? Ay, but that is impossible; for Plato himself lays the foundation of hope, and the prospect of conquest, for his own state, in the weakness (growing out of luxury, together with the conjugal and parental relations) presumable throughout the neighboring states.

These ambulatory nurseries, therefore, never could be made to interest the honor even of a Platonic army, since no man would consent to embark his own honor upon a stake to which the enemy afforded no corresponding stake: always to expose your own honor to loss with no reversionary gain under any contingency; always to suffer anxiety in your own person with no possibility of retaliating this anxiety upon the enemy — would have been too much for the temper of Socrates; and we fear that he would have left even Xantippe herself, with all her utensils of every kind, as a derelict for the benefit of the enemy in dry weather, when a deluge from upper windows might not have been unwelcome. But if no honor were pledged upon

* '*Frail*,' not from any indisposition to gasconade: but there was a dark superstition which frightened the Greeks from raising any durable monuments to a triumph over Greeks: judicial calamities would descend upon the victors, *Nemesis* would be upon their haunches, if they exulted too loudly. Stone, therefore, marble, and brass, were forbidden materials for the *tropæa!* they were always made of wood. If not, look out for squalls ahead!

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the nursery in the rear, the next step would certainly be, that under difficult circumstances, stress of weather, short provisions, or active light cavalry in the rear, the nursery would become the capital nuisance of the army. Ambulatory hospitals, though so evidently a personal interest of the nearest kind, are trying to soldiers when overworked; but ambulatory nurseries, with no intelligible motive for their presence, continual detachments and extra guards on *their* account, with an enemy laughing at the nursery uproars, would cause a mutiny if Plato were there in person. Sentiment but ill accords with the gross realities of business, as Charles Lamb illustrated (rather beyond the truth in that case) with regard to Lord Camelford's corpse, when clearing the custom-house for interment under an aged tree in Switzerland; and to hawk along with an army a *menagerie* of spectators, against a day of battle, would be an arrangement so little applicable to any but select expeditions, that the general overturn of caravans once a day, and the continual fracture of skulls, would be the least tragical issue within reasonable expectation. Not being 'sacred,' as the depositaries of honor, they would soon become 'profane.' And speaking gravely, when we reflect on the frequency, even in Christian lands, with which, under the trials of extreme poverty, the parental tie gives way — what other result than open insubordination could be expected from a plan which was adapted to a mere melodramatic effect, at the price of universal comfort for months? Not being associated with patriotic honor, as we have endeavored to show, and the parental tie being so aërial in any case where neither mother nor child belonged to the individual,

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but also so exceedingly questionable in the case of Plato's artifices for concealment having succeeded to the letter — what visionary statesmanship would it prove to build for so much as a day's service, or for an extra effort, upon the pretence of those who could have little other value in the soldier's eye than that they were natives of the same city with himself!

Even this, however, is not the worst: pursuing to the last the regulations of Plato, the reader is more and more surprised by the unconscious inconsistency which emerges: for whilst recollecting the weight of service — the stress which Plato has thrown upon the parental affection in this case — he finds still farther proof of the excessive degradation to which Plato has reduced the rank of that affection as a moral principle: in short, he finds him loading it with responsibility as a duty, whilst he is destroying it as an honor, and polluting it as an elevated enjoyment. Let us follow the regulations to their end: — The guardians of the state, as they are called in their civil relation, the soldiers, as they are called with respect to foreign states and to enemies in general, have been originally selected for their superior qualities of body. Thus the most natural (because the most obvious) grounds of personal vanity, are here at once concentrated by state preference and peculiar rank. In civilized states, these advantages being met and thwarted at every turning by so many higher modes of personal distinction — knowledge, special accomplishments applicable to special difficulties, intellect generally, experience large and comprehensive, or local and peculiar — riches, popular influence, high birth, splendid connections; the consequence is, that mere physical advantages rank as the

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lowest class of pretensions, and practically are not of much avail, except as regards beauty when eminent in women, though even for that the sphere is narrow; since what woman, by mere beauty, ever drew after her such a train of admirers as a few of our modern female writers in verse? Consequently the arrogance in these soldiers of Plato, finding themselves at once acknowledged as the best models of physical excellence in the state, and also, in the second place, raised to the rank of an aristocracy on account of this excellence, would be unlimited. It would be crossed by no other mode of excellence — since no other would be recognized and countenanced by the state.

With this view of their own vast superiority, naturally — and excusably in a state conformed to that mode of thinking — looking upon their own rank as a mere concession of justice to their claims of birth, the soldiers would review their condition in other respects. They would then find that, under the Platonic laws, they enjoyed two advantages: viz. first, a harem furnished with the select females of the state, having precisely the sort of personal pre-eminence corresponding to their own; a modern Mahometan polygamy, in fact, but without the appropriation which constitutes the luxury of Mahometan principles; secondly, a general precedency. On the other hand, to balance these privileges, and even with the most dissolute men greatly to outweigh them, they would find —

1. That they had, and could have, no property; not a fragment: even their arms would be the property of the state; even the dress of mail, in which the ὁπλῖται, or *men-at-arms*, (heavy-armed cuirassiers, or cataphractoi,) must be arrayed, would return to the

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ὁπλοθηκη, or *arsenal*, in time of peace: not a chattel, article of furniture, or personal ornament, but would have a public stamp as it were, upon it, making it felony to sell, or give, or exchange it. It is true that, to reconcile the honorable men, the worshipful paupers, to this austere system, Plato tells us — that the other orders of citizens will not be rich: nobody, in fact, will be allowed to possess any great wealth. But there is still a difference between something and nothing. And then, as to this supposed *maximum* of riches which is to be adopted, no specific arrangements are shown, by which, in consistency with any freedom of action, further accumulation can be intercepted, or actual possession ascertained.

2. 'But,' says Plato, 'what would the fellows want with property? Food, is it? Have they not *that* food at the public cost; and better for their health than any which they would choose? Drink — is there not the river? And if by ill luck it should happen to be a χειμαῤῥους, rather dependent upon winter floods and upon snows melting in early summer, is there not the rain at all times in cisterns and tanks, for those who prefer it? Shoemakers and weavers — (if it is shoes and tunics they want) — are they not working throughout the year for their benefit?' — All this is true: but still they are aware that their own labors and hardships would earn food and clothes upon regular wages: and that, on the general scale of remuneration for mercenary soldiership in Greece, adding their dangers to their daily work, they might obtain enough to purchase even such immoral superfluities as wine.

3. At present, again, this honored class have many wives; none of their fellow-citizens more than one.

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But here, again, what a mockery of the truth! that one is really and exclusively the wife of him whom she has married; dedicates her love and attentions and her confidential secrecy to that man only; knows and retains her own children in her own keeping; and these children regard their own parents as their own sole benefactors. How gladly would the majority of the guardians, after two years' experience of the dissolute barrack, accept in exchange the quiet privacy of the artisan's cottage!

4. The soldiers again, it is urged, enjoy something of that which sweetens a sailor's life, and keeps it from homely insipidity — viz. the prospect of adventure, and of foreign excursions: even danger is a mode of stimulation. But how? Under what restriction do they enjoy these prospects of peril and adventure? Never but on a service of peculiar hardship. For it is a badge of their slavery to public uses, that for them only there exists no liberty of foreign travel. All the rest throughout the city, may visit foreign lands; the honorable class only is confined to the heartless tumult of its dissolute barracks.

Plato evidently felt these bitter limitations of free agency to be, at the same time, oppressive and degrading. Still he did not think himself at liberty to relax them. His theory he conceived to be a sort of watch-work, which would keep moving if all the parts were kept in their places, but would stop on any disturbance of their relations. Not being able to give any relief, the next thing was — to find compensation. And accordingly, in addition to the sensual bait of polygamy already introduced as the basis of his plan, he now proceeds to give a still wider license to appe-

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tite. It takes the shape of a dispensation in practice, from a previous special restriction in one particular direction: the whole body of guardians and their female associates, or 'wives,' are excluded from conjugal intercourse except within strict limits as to age; from the age of twenty to forty for the women, of thirty to fifty for the men, is the range within which they are supposed to be capable of producing a healthy race of children. Within those limits they are licensed: not further. But, by way of compensation, unlimited concubinage is tolerated for the seniors; with this one dreadful proviso — that any children born from such connections, as presumably not possessing the physical stamina, or other personal advantages looked for from more carefully selected parents, must be exposed. Born of fathers who possess no personal property, these children could have no patrimony; nor succeed to any place as a tradesman, artisan, or laborer. Succeeding to a state father, they succeed to nothing; they are thrown as waifs or strays on the state bounty: and for that they are not eligible, as not having been born within the privilege of the state regulations. No party, therefore, known to the state being responsible for their maintenance, they must die. And because the ancients had a scruple, (no scruple of mercy, but of selfish superstition,) as to taking the life by violence from any creature not condemned under some law, the mode of death must be by exposure on the open hills; when either the night air, or the fangs of a wolf, oftentimes of the great dogs, still preserved in many parts of Greece, usually put an end to the unoffending creature's life.

Now, with this sensual bounty on infanticide, and

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this regular machinery for calling into existence such ill-fated blossoms on the tree of life, and for immediately strewing them on the ground by the icy wind of death, cutting adrift the little boat to go down the Niagara of violent death, in the very next night after its launching on its unknown river of life — could Plato misconceive the result? could he wish to misconceive it, as regarded the pieties of parental love? To make human life cheaper and more valueless than that of the brutes — is that the way to cherish the sanctity of parental affection; upon which affection, however, elsewhere, Plato throws so heavy a burden of duty?

Plato would have been surprised, had he anticipated the discoveries of modern experience as to the effect of marriages so assorted in point of age as he has supposed. This one arrangement, by mere disproportion of the sexes, would have introduced strange disturbances into his system. But for general purpose, it is more important to remark — that the very indulgences of Plato are sensual: from a system in itself sensual in the most cruel degree, Plato grants a dispensation only to effect a Otaheitian carnival of licentious appetite, connected with a contempt of human life, which is excessive even for paganism; since in *that* the exposure of children is allowed as a relief from supposed evils of nature; but here the evil was self-created.

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HOMER AND THE HOMERIDÆ.

[1841.]

HOMER, the general patriarch of Occidental literature, reminds us oftentimes and powerfully, of the river Nile. If you, reader, should (as easily you may) be seated on the banks of that river in the months of February or March, 1842, you may count on two luxuries for a poetic eye — first, on a lovely cloudless morning; secondly, on a gorgeous flora. For it has been remarked, that nowhere, out of tropical regions, is the vernal equipage of nature so rich, so pompously variegated, in buds, and bells, and blossoms, as precisely in this unhappy Egypt — a 'house of bondage' undeniably, in all ages, to its own working population; and yet, as if to mock the misery it witnesses, the gayest of all lands in its spontaneous flora. Now, supposing yourself to be seated, together with a child or two, on some flowery carpet of the Delta; and supposing the Nile — 'that ancient river' — within sight; happy infancy on the one side, the everlasting pomp of waters on the other; and the thought still intruding, that on some quarter of your position, perhaps fifty miles out of sight, stand pointing to the heavens the mysterious pyramids. These circumstances presupposed, it is inevitable that your thoughts should wander

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upwards to the dark fountains of origination. The pyramids, why and when did they arise? This infancy, so lovely and innocent, whence does it come, whither does it go? This creative river, what are its ultimate well-heads? That last question was viewed by antiquity as charmed against solution. It was not permitted, they fancied, to dishonor the river Nile by stealing upon his solitude in a state of weakness and childhood —

'Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.'

So said Lucan. And in those days no image that the earth suggested could so powerfully express a mysterious secrecy, as the coy fountains of the Nile. At length came Abyssinian Bruce; and that superstition seemed to vanish. Yet now again the mystery has revolved upon us. You have drunk, you say, from the fountains of the Nile. Good; but, my friend, from which fountains? 'Which king, Bezonian?' Understand that there is another branch of the Nile — another mighty arm, whose fountains lie in far other regions. The great letter Y, that Pythagorean marvel, is still covered with shades in one-half of its bifurcation. And the darkness which, from the eldest of days, has invested Father Nile with fabulous awe, still broods over his most ancient fountains, defies our curious impertinence, and will not suffer us to behold the survivor of Memphis, and of Thebes — the hundred-gated — other than in his grandeur as a benefactor of nations.

Such thoughts, a world of meditations pointing in the same direction, settle also upon Homer. Eight-and-twenty hundred years, according to the improved

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views of chronology, have men drunk from the waters of this earliest among poets. Himself, under one of his denominations, the son of a river [Melesigenes], or the grandson of a river [Mæonides], he has been the parent of fertilizing streams carried off derivatively into every land. Not the fountains of the Nile have been so diffusive, or so creative, as those of Homer —

> —— 'a quo deu fonte perenni,
> Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.'

There is the same gayety of atmosphere, the same 'blue rejoicing sky,' the same absence of the austere and the gloomy sublime, investing the Grecian Homer as invests the Nile of the Delta. And again, if you would go upwards to the fountains of this ancient Nile, or of this ancient Homer, you would find the same mysterious repulsion. In both cases you find their fountains shyly retreating before you; and like the sacred peaks of Ararat, where the framework of Noah's ark reposes, never less surmounted than when a man fancies himself within arm's reach of their central recesses.*

A great poet appearing in early ages, and a great river, bear something of the same relation to human civility and culture. In this view, with a peculiar sublimity, the Hindoos consider a mighty fertilizing river,

* Seven or eight Europeans — some Russian, some English — have not only taken possession of the topmost crag on Ararat by means of the broadest disc which their own persons offered, but have left flags flying, to mark out for those below, the exact station which they had reached. All to no purpose! The bigoted Armenian still replied — these are mere illusions worked by demons.

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when bursting away with torrent rapture from its mountain cradle, and billowing onwards through two thousand miles of realms made rich by itself, as in some special meaning 'the Son of God.' The word Burrampooter is said to bear that sublime sense. Hence arose the profound interest about the Nile: what cause could produce its annual swelling? Even as a phenomenon *that* was awful, but much more so as a creative agency; for it was felt that Egypt, which is but the valley of the Nile, had been the mere creation of the river annually depositing its rich layers of slime. Hence arose the corresponding interest about Homer; for Greece and the Grecian Isles were in many moral respects as much the creation of Homer as Egypt of the Nile. And if, on the one hand, it is unavoidable to assume some degree of civilization before a Homer could exist, on the other, it is certain that Homer, by the picture of unity which he held aloft to the Greeks, in making them co-operate to a common enterprise against Asia, and by the intellectual pleasure which he first engrafted upon the innumerable festivals of Hellas, did more than lawgivers to propagate this early civilization, and to protect it against those barbarizing feuds or migrations which through some centuries menaced its existence.

Having, therefore, the same motive of curiosity — having the same awe, connected first, with secrecy; secondly, with remoteness; and thirdly, with beneficent power, which turn our inquiries to the infant Nile; let us pursue a parallel investigation with regard to the infant Homer. How was Homer possible? how could such a poet as Homer — how could such a poem as the Iliad — arise in days so illiterate? Or rather,

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and first of all, *was* Homer possible? If the *Iliad* could and did arise, not as a long series of separate phenomena, but as one solitary birth of revolutionary power, how was it preserved? how passed onwards from generation to generation? how propagated over Greece during centuries, when our modern facilities for copying on paper, and the general art of reading, were too probably unknown?

We presume every man of letters to be aware, that, since the time of the great German philologer, Fred. Augustus Wolf, (for whose life and services to literature, see Wilhelm Koerte's '*Leben und Studien Friedr. Aug. Wolfs*,' 1833,) a great shock has been given to the slumbering credulity of men on these Homeric subjects; a galvanic resuscitation to the ancient scepticism on the mere possibility of an *Iliad*, such as we now have it, issuing sound and complete, in the tenth or eleventh century before Christ, from the brain of a blind man, who had not (*they say*) so much as chalk towards the scoring down of his thoughts. The doubts moved by Wolf in 1795, propagated a controversy in Germany which has subsisted down to the present time. This controversy concerns Homer himself, and his first-born child, the *Iliad*; for as to the *Odyssey*, sometimes reputed the child of his old age, and as to the minor poems, which never could have been ascribed to him by philosophic critics, these are universally given up — as having no more connection with Homer personally than any other of the many epic and cyclical poems which arose during Post-Homeric ages, in a spirit of imitation, more or less diverging from the primitive Homeric model.

Fred. Wolf raised the question soon after the time

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of the French Revolution. Afterwards he pursued it [1797] in his letters to Heyne. But it is remarkable that a man so powerful in scholarship, witnessing the universal fermentation he had caused, should not have responded to the general call upon himself to come forward and close the dispute with a comprehensive valuation of all that had been said, and all that yet remained to be said, upon this difficult problem. Voss, the celebrated translator of Homer into German dactylic hexameters, was naturally interested by a kind of personal stake in the controversy. He wrote to Wolf — warmly, perhaps, and in a tone almost of moral remonstrance; but without losing his temper, or forgetting the urbanity of a scholar. 'I believe,' said he in his later correspondence of the year 1796, 'I believe in one *Iliad*, in one *Odyssey*, and in one Homer as the sole father of both. Grant that Homer could not write his own name — and so much I will concede that your acute arguments have almost demonstrated — still to my thinking *that* only enhances the glory of the poet. The unity of this poet, and the unity of his works, are as yet to me unshaken ideas. But what then? I am no bigot in my creed, so as to close my ears against all hostile arguments. And these arguments, let me say plainly, you now owe to us all; arguments drawn from the *internal* structure of the Homeric poems. You have wounded us, Mr. Wolf, in our affections; you have affronted us, Mr. Wolf, in our tenderest sensibilities. But still we are just men; ready to listen, willing to bear and to forbear. Meantime the matter cannot rest here. You owe it, Mr. Wolf, to the dignity of the subject, not to keep back those proofs which doubtless you possess; proofs, observe, conclusive

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proofs. For hitherto, permit me to say, you have merely played with the surface of the question. True, even that play has led to some important results; and for these no man is more grateful than myself. But the main battle is still in arrear.'

Wolf, however, hearkened not to such appeals. He had called up spirits, by his evocation, more formidable than he looked for or could lay. Perhaps, like the goddess Eris at the wedding feast, he had merely sought to amuse himself by throwing a ball of contention amongst the literati: a little mischief was all he contemplated, and a little learned Billingsgate. Things had taken a wider circuit. Wolf's acuteness in raising objections to all the received opinions had fallen upon a kindly soil: the public mind had reacted powerfully; for the German mind is but too naturally disposed to scepticism; and Wolf found himself at length in this dilemma — viz. that either by writing a very inadequate sequel, he must forfeit the reputation he had acquired; or that he must prepare himself for a compass of research to which his spirits were not equal, and to which his studies had not latterly been directed. A man of high celebrity may be willing to come forward in undress, and to throw out such casual thoughts as the occasion may prompt, provided he can preserve his *incognito*; but if he sees a vast public waiting to receive him with theatric honors, and a flourish of trumpets announcing his approach, reasonably he may shrink from facing expectations so highly raised, and may perhaps truly plead an absolute impossibility of pursuing further any question under such original sterility of materials, and after so elaborate a cultivation by other laborers.

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Wolf, therefore, is not to be blamed for having declined, in its mature stages, to patronize his own question. *His own* we call it, because he first pressed its strongest points; because he first kindled it into a public feud; and because, by his matchless revisal of the Homeric text, he gave to the world, simultaneously with his doubts, the very strongest credentials of his own right to utter doubts. And the public, during the forty-six years' interval which has succeeded to his first opening of the case, have viewed the question as so exclusively *his*, that it is generally known under the name of the Wolfian hypothesis. All this is fair and natural; that rebel who heads the mob of insurgents is rightly viewed as the father of the insurrection. Yet still, in the rigor of justice, we must not overlook the earlier conspirators. Not to speak here of more ancient sceptics, it is certain that in modern times Bentley, something more than one hundred and fifty years back, with his usual divinity of eye, saw the opening for doubts. Already in the year 1689, when he was a young man fresh from college, Bentley gave utterance to several of the Wolfian scruples. And, indeed, had he done nothing more than call attention to the digamma, as applied to the text of Homer, he could not have escaped feeling and communicating these scruples. To a man who was one day speaking of some supposed *hiatus* in the *Iliad*, Bentley, from whom courtesy flowed as naturally as 'milk from a male tiger,' called out — '*Hiatus*, man! *Hiatus* in your throat! There is no such thing in Homer.' And, when the other had timidly submitted to him such cases as μεγα ειπων or καλα ϝεργα, or μελιηδεα οινον, Bentley showed him that, unless where the final syllable of the prior word hap-

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pened to be *in arsi*, (as suppose in Πηληιαδεω Αχιληος,) universally the *hiatus* had not existed to the ears of Homer. And why? Because it was cured by the interposition of the digamma: 'Apud Homerum sæpe *videtur* hiatus esse, ubi prisca littera digamma explebat inter medium spatium.' Thus μελιηδεα οινον in Homer's age was μελιηδεα Foινον (from which Æolic form is derived our modern word for *wine* in all the western and central languages of Christendom; F is V, and V is W all the world over — whence vin, wine, vino, wein, wün, and so on; all originally depending upon that Æoliac letter F, which is so necessary to the metrical integrity of Homer.) Now, when once a man of Bentley's sagacity had made that step — forcing him to perceive that here had been people of old time tampering with Homer's text, (else how had the digamma dropped out of the place which once it must have occupied,) he could not but go a little further. If you see one or two of the indorsements on a bill misspelt, you begin to suspect general forgery. When the text of Homer had once become frozen and settled, no man could take liberties with it at the risk of being tripped up himself on its glassy surface, and landed in a lugubrious sedentary posture, to the derision of all critics, compositors, pressmen, devils, and devillets. But whilst the text was yet piping hot, or lukewarm, or in the transitional state of cooling, every man who had a private purpose to serve might impress upon its plastic wax whatever alterations he pleased, whether by direct addition or by substitution, provided only he had skill to evade any ugly seam or cicatrice. It is true he could run this adulterated Homer only on that particular road to which he happened to have access.

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But then, in after generations, when all the Homers were called in by authority for general collation, *his* would go up with the rest; his forgery would be accepted for a various reading, and would thus have a fair chance of coming down to posterity — which word means, at this moment, *you*, reader, and ourselves. We are posterity. Yes, even we have been humbugged by this Pagan rascal; and have doubtless drunk off much of his swipes, under the firm faith that we were drinking the pure fragrant wine (the μελιηδεα Φοινον) of Homer.

Bentley having thus warned the public, by one general *caveat*, that tricks upon travellers might be looked for on this road, was succeeded by Wood, who, in his *Essay on the Genius of Homer*, occasionally threw up rockets in the same direction. This essay first crept out in the year 1769, but only to the extent of seven copies; and it was not until the year 1775,* that a second edition diffused the new views freely amongst the world. The next memorable era for this question occurred in 1788, during which year it was that Villoison published his *Iliad;* and, as part of its apparatus, he printed the famous Venetian *Scholia*, hitherto known only to inspectors of MSS. These *Scholia* gave strength to the modern doubts, by showing that many of them were but ancient doubts in a new form. Still, as the worshipful Scholiasts do not offer the pleas-

* It is a proof, however, of the interest, even at that time, taken by Germany in English literature, as well as of the interest taken in this Homeric question, that one of the seven copies published in 1769 must have found its way to some German scholar; for already, in 1773, a German translation of Wood had been published at Frankfort.

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antest reading in the world, most of them being rather drowsy or so — truly respectable men, but somewhat apoplectic — it could not be expected that any explosion of sympathy should follow: the clouds thickened; but the man who was to draw forth the lightnings from their surcharged volumes, had not yet come forward. In the meantime, Herder, not so much by learning as by the sagacity of his genius, threw out some pregnant hints of the disputable points. And finally, in 1795, Wolf marched forth in complete mail, a sheaf of sceptical arrows rattling on his harness, all of which he pointed and feathered, giving by his learning, or by masculine sense, buoyancy to their flight, so as to carry them into every corner of literary Europe. Then began the 'row' — then the steam was mounted which has never since subsided — and then opened upon Germany a career of scepticism, which from the very first promised to be contagious. It was a mode of revolutionary disease, which could not by its very nature confine itself to Homer. The religious reader has since had occasion to see, with pain, the same principles of audacious scepticism applied to books and questions far more important; but, as might be shown upon a fitting occasion, with no reason whatever for serious anxiety as to any popular effect. Meantime, for those numerous persons who do not read Latin or German with fluency, but are familiar with French, the best comprehensive view of Wolf's arguments, (as given in his Homeric *Prolegomena*, or subsequently in his *Briefe an Heyne*,) is to be found in Franceson's *Essai sur la question — Si Homére a connu l'usage de l'écriture*. Berlin, 1818.

This French work we mention, as meeting the wants

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of those who simply wish to know how the feud began. But, as that represents only the early stages of the entire speculation, it will be more satisfactory for all who are seriously interested in Homer, and without partisanship seek to know the plain unvarnished truth — 'Is Homer a hum, and the Iliad a hoax?' — to consult the various papers on this subject which have been contributed by Nitzsch to the great *Allgemeine Encyclopædie* of modern Germany. Nitzsch's name is against him; it is intolerable to see such a thicket of consonants with but one little bit of a vowel amongst them; it is like the proportions between Falstaff's bread and his sack. However, after all, the man did not make his own name, and the name looks worse than it sounds, for it is but our own word *niche*, barbarously written. This man's essays are certainly the most full and representative pleadings which this extensive question has produced. On the other hand, they labor in excess with the prevailing vices of German speculation; viz. 1st, vague indeterminate conception; 2dly, total want of power to methodize or combine the parts, and indeed generally a barbarian inaptitude for composition. But, waiving our quarrel with Nitzsch and with Nitzsch's name, no work of his can be considered as generally accessible; his body is not in court, and, if it were, it talks German. So, in his chair we shall seat ourselves; and now, with one advantage over him — viz. that we shall never leave the reader to muse for an hour over our meaning — we propose to state the outline of the controversy; to report the decisions upon the several issues sent down for trial upon this complex suit; and the apparent tendencies, so far as they are yet discoverable, towards that kind of gen-

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eral judgment which must be delivered by the Chancery of European criticism, before this dispute will subside into repose.

The great sectional or subordinate points into which the Homeric controversy breaks up, are these: —

I. *Homer* — that is, the poet as distinct from his works.

II. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* — that is, the poems as distinct from their author.

III. The *Rhapsodoi*, or poetic chanters of Greece; these, and their predecessors or their contemporaries — the *Aoidoi*, the *Citharœdi*, the *Homeridæ*.

IV. *Lycurgus*.

V. *Solon* — and the Pisistratidæ.

VI. The *Diascenastæ*.

We hardly know at what point to take up this ravelled tissue; but, by way of tracing the whole theme *ab ovo*, suppose we begin by stating the chronological bearings of the principal objects (things as well as persons) connected with the *Iliad*.

Ilium was that city of Asia Minor, whose memorable fortunes and catastrophe furnished the subject of the *Iliad*. At what period of human history may we reasonably suppose this catastrophe to have occurred? Never did a great man err so profoundly as Sir Isaac Newton on this very question, in deducing the early chronology of Greece. The semi-fabulous section of Grecian annals he crowded into so narrow a space, and he depressed the whole into such close proximity to the regular opening of history, (that is, to the Olympiads,) that we are perfectly at a loss to imagine with what sort of men, events, and epochs, Sir Isaac would have peopled that particular interval of a thousand

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years in Grecian chronology, which corresponds to the scriptural interval between the patriarch Abraham and Solomon, the Jewish king. This interval commences with the year 2000 before Christ, and terminates with the year 1000 before Christ. But such is the fury of Sir Isaac for depressing all events not absolutely fabulous below this latter terminus, that he has really left himself without counters to mark the progress of man, or to fill the cells of history, through a millennium of Grecian life. The whole thousand years, as respects Hellas, is a mere desert upon Sir Isaac's map of time. As one instance of Sir Isaac's modernizing propensities, we never could sufficiently marvel at his supposing the map of the heavens, including those constellations which are derived from the Argonautic enterprise, to have been completed about the very time of that enterprise: as if it were possible that a coarse, clumsy hulk like the ship Argo, at which no possible Newcastle collier but would have sneezed, or that any of the men who navigated her, could take a consecrated place in men's imagination, or could obtain an everlasting memorial in the starry heavens, until time, by removing gross features, and by blending all the circumstances with the solemnities of vast distance, had reconciled the feelings to a sanctity which must have been shocking, as applied to things local and familiar.

Far different from Sir Isaac's is the present chronological theory. Almost universally it is now agreed, that the siege of Troy occurred about 1300, or, at the lowest calculation, more than 1200 years before Christ. What, then, is the chronological relation of Homer to Troy? It is generally agreed, that the period of his

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flourishing was from two to three centuries after Troy. By some it was imagined that Homer himself had been a Trojan; and therefore contemporary with the very heroes whom he exhibits. Others, like our Jacob Bryant, have fancied that he was not merely coeval with those heroes, but actually was one of those heroes — viz. Ulysses; and that the *Odyssey* rehearses the personal adventures, the voyages, the calamities of Homer. It is our old friend the poet, but with a new face; he is now a soldier, a sailor, a king, and, in case of necessity, a very fair boxer, or 'fistic artist,' for the abatement of masterful beggars, 'sorners,' or other nuisances. But these wild fancies have found no success. All scholars have agreed in placing a deep gulf of years between Homer and the Ilium which he sang. Aristarchus fixes the era of Homer at 140 years after the Trojan war; Philochorus at 180 years; Apollodorus at 240; the Arundel Marbles at 302; and Herodotus, who places Homer about 400 years before his own time, (*i. e.* about 850 before Christ,) ought, therefore, to be interpreted as assuming 350 years at least between Homer and Troy. So that the earliest series of events connected from before and from behind with the Grecian bard, may be thus arranged: —

Years bef. Christ.

1220 — Trojan expedition.

1000 — Homer a young man, and contemporary with the building of the *first* temple at Jerusalem.

820 — Lycurgus brings into the Peloponnesus from Crete, (or else from Ionia,) the Homeric poems, hitherto unknown upon the Grecian continent.

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Up to this epoch, (the epoch of transplanting the *Iliad* from Greece insular and Greece colonial to Greece continental,) the Homeric poems had been left to the custody of two schools, or professional orders, interested in the text of these poems: *how* interested, or in what way their duties connected them with Homer, we will not at this point inquire. Suffice it, that these two separate orders of men *did* confessedly exist; one being elder, perhaps, than Homer himself, or even than Troy — viz. the *Aoidoi* and *Citharœdi*. These, no doubt, had originally no more relation to Homer than to any other narrative poet; their duty of musical recitation had brought them connected with Homer, as it would have done with any other popular poet; and it was only the increasing current of Homer's predominance over all rival poets, which gradually gave such a bias and inflection to these men's professional art, as at length to suck them within the great Homeric tide; they became, but were not originally, a sort of Homeric choir and orchestra — a chapel of priests having a ministerial duty in the vast Homeric cathedral. Through them exclusively, perhaps, certainly through them chiefly, the two great objects were secured — first, that to each separate generation of men Homer was *published* with all the advantages of a musical accompaniment; secondly, that for distant generations Homer was *preserved*. We do not thus beg the question as to the existence of alphabetic writing in the days of Homer; on the contrary, we go along with Nitzsch and others in opposing Wolf upon that point. We believe that a laborious art of writing *did* exist; but with such disadvantages as to writing materials, that Homer (we are satisfied) would have

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fared ill as regards his chance of reaching the polished ages of Pericles, had he relied on written memorials, or upon any mode of publication less impassioned than the orchestral chanting of the *Rhàpsodoi*. The other order of men dedicated to some Homeric interest, whatever that might be, were those technically known as the *Homeridæ*. The functions of these men have never been satisfactorily ascertained, or so as to discriminate them broadly and firmly from the *Citharœdi* and *Rhapsodoi*. But in two features it is evident that they differ essentially — first, that the *Homeridæ* constituted a more *local* and domestic college of Homeric ministers, confined originally to a single island, not diffused (as were the *Rhapsodoi*) over all Greece; secondly, that by their very name, which refers them back to Homer as a mere product from his influence, this class of followers is barred from pretending in the Homeric equipage, (like the *Citharœdi*) to any independent existence, still less to any anterior existence. The musical reciters had been a general class of public ministers, gradually sequestered into the particular service of Homer; but the *Homeridæ* were, in some way or other, either by blood, or by fiction of love and veneration, Homer's direct personal representatives.

Thus far, however, though there is evidence of two separate colleges or incorporations who charged themselves with the general custody, transmission, and publication of the Homeric poems, we hear of no care applied to the periodical review of the Homeric text; we hear of no man taking pains to qualify himself for that office by collecting copies from all quarters, or by applying the supreme political authority to the conservation and the authentication of the

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Homeric poems. The text of no book can become an object of anxiety, until by numerous corruptions it has become an object of doubt. Lycurgus, it is true, the Spartan lawgiver, *did* apply his own authority, in a very early age, to the general purpose of importing the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But there his office terminated. Critical skill, applied to the investigation of an author's text, was a function of the human mind as unknown in the Greece of Lycurgus as in the Germany of Tacitus, or the Tongataboo of Captain Cook. And of all places in Greece, such delicate reactions of the intellect upon its own creations were least likely to arise amongst the illiterate Dorial tribes of the Southern Peloponnesus — wretches that hugged their own barbarizing institutions as the very jewels of their birthright, and would most certainly have degenerated rapidly into African brutality, had they not been held steady, and forcibly shouldered into social progress, by the press of surrounding tribes more intellectual than themselves.

Thus continued matters through about four centuries from Homer. And by that time we begin to feel anxious about the probable state of the Homeric text. Not that we suppose any *interregnum* in Homer's influence — not that we believe in any possible defect of links in that vast series of traditional transmitters; the integrity of that succession was guarantied by its interwreathing itself with human pleasures, with religious ceremonies, with household and national festivals. It is not that Homer would have become apocryphal or obscure for want of public repetition; on the contrary, too constant and too fervent a repetition would have been the main source of corruptions

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in the text. Sympathy in the audience must always have been a primary demand with the *Rhapsodoi*, and, to perfect sympathy, it is a previous condition to be perfectly understood. Hence, when allusions were no longer intelligible or effectual, it might sometimes happen that they would be dropped from the text; and when any Homeric family or city had become extinct, the temptation might be powerful for substituting the names of others who could delight the chanter by fervid gratitude for a distinction which had been merited, or could reward him with gifts for one which had not. But it is not necessary to go over the many causes in preparation, after a course of four centuries, for gradually sapping the integrity of Homer's text. Everybody will agree, that it was at length high time to have some edition 'by authority;' and that, had the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* received no freezing arrest in their licentious tendency towards a general interfusion of their substance with modern ideas, most certainly by the time of Alexander, *i. e.* about seven centuries from Homer, either poem would have existed only in fragments. The connecting parts between the several books would have dropped out; and all the αριστειαι, or episodes dedicated to the honor of a particular hero, might, with regard to names less hallowed in the imagination of Greece, or where no representatives of the house remained, have perished utterly. It was a real providential care for the civilization of Greece, which caused the era of state editions to supersede the *ad libitum* text of the careless or the interested, just at that precise period when the rapidly rising tide of Athenian refinement would soon have swept away all the landmarks of primitive

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Greece, and when the altered character of the public reciters would have co-operated with the other difficulties of the case to make a true Homeric text irrecoverable. For the *Rhapsodoi* were in a regular course of degradation to the rank of mere mercenary artists, from that of sacred minstrels, who connected the past with the present, and who sang — precisely because their burthen of truth was too solemn for unimpassioned speech. This was the station they *had* occupied; but it remains in evidence against them, that they were rapidly sinking under the changes of the times — were open to tribes, and, as one consequence (whilst partly it was one cause) of this degradation, that they had ceased to command the public respect. The very same changes, and through the very same steps, and under the very same agencies, have been since exhibited to Europe in the parallel history of the minstrels. The pig-headed Ritson, in mad pursuit of that single idea which might vex Bishop Percy, made it his business, in one essay, to prove, out of the statutes at large, and out of local court records, that the minstrel, so far from being that honored guest in the courts of princes whom the bishop had described, was, in fact, a rogue and a vagabond by act of Parliament, standing in awe of that great man, the parish beadle, and liable to be kicked out of any hundred or tithing where he should be found trespassing. But what nonsense! the minstrel was, and he was not, all that the bishop and others had affirmed. The contradiction lay in the *time;* Percy and Ritson spoke of different periods; the bishop of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries — the attorney of the sixteenth and seven-

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teenth. Now the Grecian *Rhapsodoi* passed through corresponding stages of declension. Having ministered through many centuries to advancing civilization, finally they themselves fell before a higher civilization; and the particular aspect of the new civilization, which proved fatal to *them*, was the general diffusion of reading as an art of liberal education. In the age of Pericles, every well-educated man could read; and one result from his skill, as no doubt it had also been one amongst its exciting causes, was — that he had a fine copy at home, beautifully adorned, of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Paper and vellum, for the last six centuries B. C. (that is, from the era of the Egyptian king, Psammetichus,) were much less scarce in Greece than during the ages immediately consecutive to Homer. This fact has been elaborately proved in recent German essays.

How providential, therefore — and with the recollection of that great part played by Greece in propagating Christianity through the previous propagation of her own literature and language, what is there in such an interference unworthy of Providence? — how providential, that precisely in that interval of one hundred and eleven years, between the year 555 B. C., the *locus* of Pisistratus, and 444 B. C., the *locus* of Pericles, whilst as yet the traditional text of Homer was retrievable, though rapidly nearing to the time when it would be strangled with weeds, and whilst as yet the arts of reading and writing had not weakened the popular devotion to Homer by dividing it amongst multiplied books; just then in that critical isthmus of time, did two or three Athenians of rank, first Solon, next Pisistratus, and

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lastly, (if Plato is right,) Hipparchus, step forward to make a public, solemn, and *legally* operative review of the Homeric poems. They drew the old vessel into dock; laid bare its timbers; and stopped the further progress of decay. What they did more than this, and by what characteristic services each connected his name with a separate province in this memorable restoration of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* — we shall inquire further on.

One century after Pisistratus we come to Pericles; or, counting from the *locus* of each, (555 B. C., and 444 B. C.,) exactly one hundred and eleven years divide them. One century after Pericles we come to Alexander the Great; or, counting from the *locus* of each, (444 B. C., and 333 B. C.,) exactly one hundred and eleven years divide them. During the period of two hundred and twenty-two years Homer had rest. Nobody was allowed to torment his text any more. And it is singular enough that this period of two hundred and twenty-two years, during which Homer reigned in the luxury of repose, having nothing to do but to let himself be read and admired, was precisely that ringfence of years within which lies true Grecian history; for, if any man wishes to master the Grecian history, he needs not to ascend above Pisistratus, nor to come down below Alexander. Before Pisistratus all is mist and fable; after Alexander, all is dependency and servitude. And remarkable it is — that, soon after Alexander, and indirectly through changes caused by him, Homer was again held out for the pleasure of the tormentors. Among the dynasties founded by Alexander's lieutenants, was one memorably devoted to literature. The Macedonian house of the Ptolemies,

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when seated on the throne of Egypt, had founded the very first public library and the first learned public. Alexander died in the year 320 B. C.; and already in the year 280 B. C., (that is, not more than forty years after,) the learned Jews of Alexandria and Palestine had commenced, under the royal patronage, that translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, which, from the supposed number of the translators, has obtained the name of the *Septuagint*. This was a service to posterity. But the earliest *Grecian* service to which this Alexandrian library ministers, was Homeric; and strikes us as singular, when we contrast it with the known idolatry towards Homer of that royal soldier, from whom the city itself, with all its novelties, drew its name and foundation. Had Alexander survived forty years longer, as very easily he might if he had insisted upon leaving his heel-taps at Babylon, how angry it would have made him that the very first trial of this new and powerful galvanic battery should be upon the body of the *Iliad!*

From 280 B. C. to 160 B. C., there was a constant succession of Homeric critics. The immense material found in the public library towards a direct history of Homer and his fortunes, would alone have sufficed to evoke a school of critics. But there was, besides, another invitation to Homeric criticism, more oblique, and eventually more effective. The Alexandrian library contained vast collections towards the study of the Greek language through all its dialects, and through all its chronological stages. This study led back by many avenues to Homer. A verse or a passage which hitherto had passed for genuine, and which otherwise, perhaps, yielded no internal argument for suspicion,

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was now found to be veined by some phrase, dialect, terminal form, or mode of using words, that might be too modern for Homer's age, or too far removed in space from Homer's Ionian country. We moderns, from our vast superiority to the Greeks themselves in Greek metrical science, have had an extra resource laid open to us for detecting the spurious in Greek poetry; and many are the condemned passages in our modern editions of Greek books, against which no jealousy would ever have arisen amongst unmetrical scholars. Here, however, the Alexandrian critics, with all their slashing insolence, showed themselves sons of the feeble; they groped about in twilight. But, even without that resource, they contrived to riddle Homer through and through with desperate gashes. In fact, after being 'treated' and 'handled' by three generations of critics, Homer came forth, (just as we may suppose one of Lucan's legionary soldiers, from the rencontre with the amphisbæna, the dipsas, and the water-snake of the African wilderness,) one vast wound, one huge system of confluent ulcers. Often in reviewing the labors of three particularly amongst these Alexandrine scorpions, we think of the Æsopian fable, in which an old man with two wives, one aged as befitted him, and the other young, submits his head alternately to the Alexandrine revision of each. The old lady goes to work at first; and upon 'moral principle' she indignantly extirpates all the black hairs which could ever have inspired him with the absurd fancy of being young. Next comes the young critic: she is disgusted with age; and upon system eliminates, (or, to speak with Aristarchus, 'obelizes,') all the gray hairs. And thus between the two ladies and their sep-

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arate editions of the old gentleman, he, poor Homeric creature, comes forth as bald as the back of one's hand. Aristarchus might well boast that he had cured Homer of the dry-rot: he *has;* and by leaving hardly one whole spar of his ancient framework. Nor can we, with our share of persimmon, comprehend what sort of abortion it is which Aristarchus would have us to accept and entertain in the room of our old original *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. To cure a man radically of the toothache, by knocking all his teeth down his throat, seems a suspicious recommendation for 'dental surgery.' And, with respect to the Homer of Aristarchus, it is to be considered, that besides the lines, sentences, and long passages, to which that Herod of critics affixed his *obelus* (†) or stiletto, there were entire books which he found no use in assassinating piecemeal; because it was not this line or that line into which he wished to thrust his dagger, but the whole rabble of lines — 'tag, rag, and bobtail.' Which reminds us of Paul Richter, who suggests to some author anxiously revising the table of his own errata — that perhaps he might think it advisable, on second thoughts, to put his whole book into the list of errata; requesting of the reader kindly to erase the total work as an oversight, or general blunder, from page one down to the word *finis*. In such cases, as Martial observes, no plurality of cancellings or erasures will answer the critic's purpose: but, '*una* litura potest.' One mighty bucket of ink thrown over the whole will do the business; but, as to obelizing, it is no better than snapping pocket-pistols in a sea-fight, or throwing crackers amongst the petticoats of a female mob.

With the Alexandrine tormentors, we may say that

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Homer's pre-Christian martyrdom came to an end. His post-Christian sufferings have been due chiefly to the Germans, who have renewed the warfare not only of Alexandrine critics, but of the ancient *Chorizontes*. These people we have not mentioned separately, because, in fact, nothing remains of their labors, and the general spirit of their warfare may be best understood from that of modern Germany. They acquired their name of *Chorizontes*, (or separators,) from their principle of breaking up the *Iliad* into multiform groups of little tadpole *Iliads;* as also of splitting the one old hazy but golden Homer, that looms upon us so venerably through a mist of centuries, into a vast reverberation of little silver Homers, that twinkled up and down the world, and lived when they found it convenient.

Now, let us combine the separate points of this chronological deduction into one focus, after which we will examine apart, each for itself, the main questions which we have already numbered as making up the elements of the controversy.

Years bef. Christian Era.

1220 — Troy.

1000 — Solomon the king of Jewry, and Homer the Grecian poet.

800 — Lycurgus the lawgiver, imports the *Iliad* into Sparta, and thus first introduces Homer to Continental Greece.

555 — Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, Pisistratus, the ruler of Athens, and Hipparchus, his son, do something as yet undetermined for the better ascertaining and maintaining of the original Homeric text.

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Years bef. Christian Era.

444 — From the text thus settled, are cited the numerous Homeric passages which we find in Plato, and all the other wits belonging to this period, the noontide of Greek literature, viz. the period of Pericles; and these passages generally coincide with our present text, so that we have no reason to doubt about our present *Iliad* being essentially the same as that which was used and read in the family of Pisistratus.

333 — This is the main year of Alexander's Persian expedition, and probably the year in which his tutor Aristotle published those notions about the tragic and epic '*unities*,' which have since had so remarkable an effect upon the arrangement of the *Iliad*. In particular the notion of 'episodes,' or digressional narratives, interwoven with the principal narrative, was entirely Aristotelian; and under that notion, people submitted easily to interpolations which would else have betrayed themselves for what they are.

320 — Alexander the Great dies.

280 down to 160 — The Alexandrian library is applied to for the searching revision of Homer; and a school in Alexandrine critics (in which school, through three consecutive generations, flourished as its leaders — Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and Aristarchus) dedicated themselves to Homer. They are usually called the Alexandrine '*grammatici*' or *littérateurs*.

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After the era of 160 B. C., by which time the second Punic war had liberated Rome from her great African rival, the Grecian or eastern states of the Mediterranean began rapidly to fall under Roman conquest. Henceforwards the text of Homer suffered no further disturbance or inquisition, until it reached the little wicked generation (ourselves and our immediate fathers) which we have the honor to address. Now, let us turn from the *Iliad*, viewed in its chronological series of fortunes, to the *Iliad* viewed in itself and in its personal relations; *i. e.* in reference to its author, to its Grecian propagators or philosophers, and to its reformers or restorers, its re-casters or interpolators, and its critical explorers.

A. — Homer.

About the year 1797, Messrs. Pitt and Dundas labored under the scandal of sometimes appearing drunk in the House of Commons; and on one particular evening, this impression was so strong against them, that the morning papers of the following three days fired off exactly one hundred and one epigrams on the occasion. One was this:

> Pitt. — I cannot see the Speaker, Hal, — can *you*?
> Dund. — Not see the Speaker! D—m'e, I see two.

Thus it has happened to Homer. Some say, 'There never was such a person as Homer.' 'No such person as Homer. On the contrary,' says others, 'there were scores.' This latter hypothesis has much more to plead for itself than the other. Numerous Homers were postulated with some apparent reason, by way of account-

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ing for the numerous Homeric poems, and numerous Homeric birthplaces. One man, it was felt, never could be equal to so many claims. Ten camel-loads of poems you may see ascribed to Homer in Fabricius; and more states than seven claimed the man. These claims, it is true, would generally have vanished, if there had been the means of critically probing them; but still there was a *primâ facie* case made out for believing in a plurality of Homers; whilst on the other hand, for denying Homer, there never was any but a verbal reason. The polytheism of the case was natural; the atheism was monstrous. Ilgen, in the preface to his edition of the Homeric Hymns, says, 'Homeri nomen, si recte video, derivandum est ex ὁμου et αρω.' And so, because the name (like many names) can be made to yield a fanciful emblematic meaning, Homer must be a myth. But in fact, Mr. Ilgen has made little advance with his ὁμυ αρω. For next comes the question, What do those two little Greek words mean? Αρω is to join, to fit, to adapt — ὁμυ is together or in harmony. But such a mere outline or schematism of an idea may be exhibited under many different constructions. One critic, for instance, understands it in the sense of dove-tailing, or metaphorical cabinet-making, as if it applied chiefly to the art of uniting words into metrical combinations. Another, Mr. Ilgen himself, takes it quite differently; it describes, not the poetical composition, or any labor whatever of the poet as a poet, but the skill of the musical accompaniment and adaptations. By accident the poet may chance to be also the musical reciter of the poem; and in that character he may have an interest in this name of

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Ὅμηρος, but not as a poet. Ὁμηρειν and ὁμηρευειν, says Hesychius, mean συμφωνειν, (to harmonize in point of sound;) the latter of the two is used in this sense by Hesiod; and more nicely, says Mr. Ilgen, it means accinere, to sing an accompaniment to another voice or to an instrument; and it means also succinere, to sing such an accompaniment in an under-key, or to sing what we moderns call a second — *i. e.* an arrangement of notes corresponding, but subordinated to the other or leading part. So says Ilgen in mixed Latin, German, and Greek. Now, we also have our pocket theory. We maintain that ὁμε αρω is Greek for packing up; and very pretty Greek, considering the hot weather. And our view of the case is this — 'Homer' was a sort of Delphic or prophetic name given to the poet, under a knowledge of that fate which awaited him in Crete, where, if he did not pack up any trunk that has yet been discovered, he was, however, himself packed up in the portmanteau of Lycurgus. Such, at least, is the coloring which the credulous Plutarch, nine hundred years after Lycurgus, gives to the story. 'Man alive!' says a German, apostrophizing this thoughtless Plutarch, 'Man alive! how could Lycurgus make a shipment of Homer's poems in the shape of a parcel for importation, unless there were written copies in Crete at a time when nobody could write? Or, how, why, for what intelligible purpose, could he have consigned this bale to a house in the Peloponnesus, where nobody could read?' Homer, he thinks, could be imported at that period only in the shape of an orchestra, as a band of Homeric chanters. But, returning seriously to the name Ὅμηρος, we say that,

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were the name absolutely bursting with hieroglyphic life this would be no proof that the man Homer, instead of writing a considerable number of octavo volumes, was (to use Mr. Ilgen's uncivil language) 'an abstract idea.' Honest people's children are not to be treated as 'abstract ideas,' because their names may chance to look symbolical. Bunyan's 'Mr. Ready-to-sink' might seem suspicious; but Mr. Strong-i'-th'-arm, who would have been a desirable companion for such an exhausted gentleman, is no abstract idea at all, but a dense broad-shouldered reality in a known street of London, liable to bills, duns, and other affections of our common humanity. Suppose, therefore, that Homer, in some one of his names, really had borne a designation glancing at symbolical meaning, what of that? this should rather be looked upon as a reflex name, artificially constructed for reverberating his glory after it had gathered, than as any predestinating (and so far marvellous) name.

Chrysostom, that eloquent father of early Christianity, had he been baptized by such a name as golden-mouthed (Chrysostomos), you would have suspected for one of Mr. Ilgen's 'abstract ideas;' but, as it happens, we all know that he existed in the body, and that the appellation by which he is usually recognized was a name of honor conferred upon him by the public in commemoration of his eloquence. However, we will bring this point to a short issue, by drawing the reader's attention to the following case: Any man, who has looked into the body of Greek rhetoricians, must know that in that *hebdomas idearum*, or septenary system of rhetorical forms

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which Hermogenes and many others illustrated, two of the seven (and the foremost two) were the qualities called *gorgotes* and *deinotes*. Now, turn to the list of early Greek rhetoricians or popular orators; and who stands first? Chronologically the first, and the *very* first, is a certain Tisias, perhaps; but he is a mere *nominis umbra*. The first who made himself known to the literature of Greece, is *Gorgias;* that Gorgias who visited Athens in the days of Socrates, (see Athenæus, for a rigorous examination of the date assigned to that visit by Plato,) the same Gorgias from whose name Plato had derived a title for one of his dialogues. Again, amongst the early Greek orators you will see *Deinarchus*. Gorgias and Deinarchus? Who but would say, were it not that these men had flourished in the meridian light of Athenian literature — 'Here we behold two ideal or symbolic orators typifying the qualities of *gorgotes* and *deinotes!*' But a stronger case still is that of Demosthenes. Were this great orator not (by comparison with Homer) a modern person, under the full blaze of history, and coeval with Alexander the Great 333 years B. C., who is there that would not pronounce him a mere allegoric man, when he understood that the name was composed of these two elements — *Demos*, the 'people' in its most democratic expression, and *sthenos*, 'strength?' this last word having been notoriously used by Homer (*mega sthenos Okeanoio*) to express that sort of power which makes itself known by thundering sound, 'the thundering strength of the people!' or, '*the people's fulminating might!*'— who would believe that the most potent of Greek orators had actually brought with him this ominous

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and magnificent name, this natural patent of presidency to the Athenian hustings? It startles us to find, lurking in any man's name, a prophecy of his after career; as, for instance, to find a Latin legend — '*And his glory shall be from the Nile*,' (*Est honor à Nilo*,) concealing itself in the name *Horatio Nelson*. But *there* the prophecy lies hidden, and cannot be extracted without a painful cork-screw process of anagram. Whereas, in *Demosthenes*, the handwriting is plain to every child: it seems witchcraft — and a man is himself alarmed at his own predestinating name. Yet for all that, with Mr. Ilgen's permission, Demosthenes was not an 'abstract idea.' Consequently, had Homer brought his name in his waistcoat pocket to the composition of the *Iliad*, he would still not have been half as mythical in appearance as several well-authenticated men, decent people's sons, who have kicked up an undeniable dust on the Athenian hustings. Besides, *Homer* has other significant or symbolizing senses. It means a *hostage*; it means a blind man, as much as a cabinet-maker, or even as a packer of trunks. Many of these 'significant names' either express accidents of birth commonly recurring, such as *Benoni*, 'The child of sorrow,' a name frequently given by young women in Westmoreland to any child born under circumstances of desertion, sudden death, &c. on the part of the father; or express those qualities which are always presumable, Honor, Prudence, Patience, &c., as common female names: or, if they imply anything special, any peculiar determination of general qualities that never could have been foreseen, in that case they must be referred to an admiring posterity — that

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senior posterity which was such for Homer, but for us has long ago become a worshipful ancestry.

From the name it is a natural step to the country. All the world knows, by means of a satirical couplet, that

> 'Seven cities claimed the mighty Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread.'

What were the names of these seven cities, (and islands,) we can inform the reader by means of an old Latin couplet amongst our schoolboy recollections —

> 'Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos, Argos, Athenæ,
> Orbis de patriâ certat, Homere, tuâ.'

Among these the two first, Smyrna and Chios, have very superior pretensions Had Homer been passed to his parish as a vagrant, or had Colophon (finding a settlement likely to be obtained by his widow) resolved upon trying the question, she would certainly have quashed any attempt to make the family chargeable upon herself. Smyrna lies under strong suspicion; the two rivers from which Homer's immediate progenitors were named — the *Mæon* and the *Meles* — bound the plains near to Smyrna. And Wood insists much upon the perfect correspondence of the climate in that region of the Levant with each and all of Homer's atmospherical indications. We suspect Smyrna ourselves, and quite as much as Mr. Wood; but still we hesitate to charge any local peculiarities upon the Smyrniote climate that could nail it in an action of damages. Gay and sunny, pellucid in air and water, we are sure that Smyrna is; in short, everything that could be wished by the public in general, or by currant dealers in particular. But really that any city

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whatever, in that genial quarter of the Mediterranean, should pretend to a sort of patent for sunshine, we must beg to have stated in a private letter 'to the Marines:' us it will not suit.

Meantime these seven places are far from being all the competitors that have entered their names with the clerk of the course. Homer has been pronounced a Syrian, which name in early Greece of course included the Jew; and so, after all, the *Iliad* may have issued from the synagogue. Babylon, also, dusky Babylon, has put in her claim to Homer; so has Egypt. And thus, if the poet were really derived from an Oriental race, his name (sinking the aspiration) may have been *Omar*. But those Oriental pretensions are mere bubbles, exhaling from national vanity. The place which, to our thinking, lies under the heaviest weight of suspicion as the seat of Homer's connections, and very often of his own residence, is the island of Crete. Smyrna, we doubt not, was his birthplace. But in those summer seas, quiet as lakes, and basking in everlasting sunshine, it would be inevitable for a stirring animated mind to float up and down the Ægean. 'Home-keeping youths had ever homely wits,' says a great poet of our own; and we doubt not that Homer had a yacht, in which he visited all the festivals of the Ægean Islands. Thus he acquired that learned eye which he manifests for female beauty 'Rosy-fingered,' 'silver-footed,' 'full-bosomed,' 'ox-eyed,' with a large vocabulary of similar notices, show how widely Homer had surveyed the different chambers of Grecian beauty; for it has happened through accidents of migration and consequent modifications of origin, combined with varieties of diet and customs, that

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the Greek Islands still differ greatly in the style of their female beauty. Now, the time for seeing the young women of a Grecian city, all congregated under the happiest circumstances of display, was in their local festivals. Many were the fair Phidiacan forms which Homer had beheld moving like goddesses through the mazes of religious choral dances. But at the islands of Ios, of Chios, and of Crete, in particular, we are satisfied that he had a standing invitation. To this hour, the Cretan life delivèrd us with the very echo of the Homeric delineations. Take four several cases: —

I. — The old Homeric superstition, for instance, which connects horses by the closest sympathy, and even by prescience, with their masters — that superstition which Virgil has borrowed from Homer in his beautiful episode of Mezentius — still lingers unbroken in Crete. Horses foresee the fates of riders who are doomed, and express their prescience by weeping in a human fashion. With this view of the horse's capacity it is singular, that in Crete this animal by preference should be called *το αλογον*, the brute or irrational creature. But the word *ἵππος* has, by some accident, been lost in the modern Greek. As an instance both of the disparaging name, and of the ennobling superstition, take the following stanza from a Cretan ballad of 1825: —

'Ωντεν εκαβαλλικευε,
Εκλαιε τ' αλογο του·
Και τοτεσα το εγνωριζε
Πως ειναι ὁ θανατος του.'

'Upon which he mounted, and his horse wept: and then he saw clearly how this should bode his death.'

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Under the same old Cretan faith, Homer, in *Il.* xvii. 437, says —

> *Δακρυα δε σφι*
> *Θερμα κατα βλεφαρων χαμαδις ἑεε μυρομενοιϊν*
> *Ἡνιοχοιο ποθῃ.*'

'Tears, scalding tears, trickled to the ground down the eyelids of them, (the horses,) fretting through grief for the loss of their charioteer.'

II. — Another almost decisive record of Homer's familiarity with Cretan life, lies in his notice of the *agrimi*, a peculiar wild goat, or ibex, found in no part of the Mediterranean world, whether island or mainland, except in Crete. And it is a case almost without a parallel in literature, that Homer should have sent down to all posterity, in sounding Greek, the most minute measurement of this animal's horns, which measurement corresponds with all those recently examined by English travellers, and in particular with three separate pairs of these horns brought to England about the year 1836, by Mr. Pashley, the learned Mediterranean traveller of Trinity College, Cambridge. Mr. Pashley has since published his travels, and from him we extract the following description of these shy but powerful animals, furnished by a Cretan mountaineer: — 'The *agrimia* are so active, that they will leap *up* a perpendicular rock of ten to fourteen feet high. They spring from precipice to precipice; and bound along with such speed, that no dog would be able to keep up with them — even on better ground than that where they are found. The sportsman must never be to windward of them, or they will perceive his approach long before he comes within musket-shot.

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They often carry off a ball; and, unless they fall immediately on being struck, are mostly lost to the sportsman, although they may have received a mortal wound. They are commonly found two, three, or four together; sometimes a herd of eight and even nine is seen. They are always larger than the common goat. In the winter time, they may be tracked by the sportsman in the snow. It is common for men to perish in the chase of them. They are of a reddish color, and never black or parti-colored like the common goat. The number of prominences on each horn, indicates the years of the animal's age.'

Now Homer in *Iliad* iv. 105, on occasion of Pandarus drawing out his bow, notices it as an interesting fact, that this bow, so beautifully polished, was derived from [the horns of] a wild goat, *αιγος αγριου*; and the epithet by which he describes this wild creature is *ιξαλος* — preternaturally agile. In his Homeric manner he adds a short digressional history of the fortunate shot from a secret ambush, by which Pandarus had himself killed the creature. From this it appears that, before the invention of gunpowder, men did not think of chasing the Cretan ibex; and from the circumstantiality of the account, it is evident that some honor attached to the sportsman who had succeeded in such a capture. He closes with the measurement of the horns in this memorable line, (memorable as preserving such a fact for three thousand years) —

'Του κερα εν κεφαλης εκκαιδεκα δωρα πεφυκει.'

'The horns from this creature's head measured sixteen *dora* in length. Now what is a *doron*? In the Venetian *Scholia*, some annotator had hit the truth, but had inadvertently used a wrong word. This word,

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an oversight, was viewed as such by Heyne, who corrected it accordingly, before any scholar had seen the animal. The *doron* is now ascertained to be a Homeric expression for a *palm*, or sixth part of a Grecian foot; and thus the extent of the horns, in that specimen which Pandaras had shot, would be two feet eight inches. Now the casual specimens sent to Cambridge by Mr. Pashley, (not likely to be quite so select as that which formed a personal weapon for a man of rank,) were all two feet seven and a half inches on the outer margin, and two feet one and a half inches on the inner. And thus the accuracy of Homer's account, (which as Heyne observes, had been greatly doubted in past ages,) was not only remarkably confirmed, but confirmed in a way which at once identifies, beyond all question, the Homeric wild-goat (αιξ αγριος) with the present *agrimi* of Crete; viz. by the unrivalled size of the animal's horns, and by the unrivalled power of the animal's movements, which rendered it necessary to shoot it from an ambush, in days before the discovery of powder.

But this result becomes still more conclusive for our present purpose: viz. for identifying Homer himself as a Cretan by his habits of life, when we mention the scientific report from Mr. Rothman of Trinity College, Cambridge, on the classification and *habitat* of the animal: — 'It is not the *bouquetin*,' (of the Alps,) 'to which, however, it bears considerable resemblance, but the real wild-goat, the *capra ægagrus* (Pallas), the supposed origin of all our domestic varieties. The horns present the anterior trenchant edge characteristic of this species. The discovery of the *ægagrus* in Crete, is perhaps a fact of some zoölogical interest;

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as it is the first well-authenticated European locality of this animal.'

Here is about as rigorous a demonstration that the sporting adventure of Pandarus must have been a Cretan adventure as would be required by the Queen's Bench. Whilst the spirited delineation of the capture, in which every word is emphatic, and picturesquely true to the very life of 1841, indicates pretty strongly that Homer had participated in such modes of sporting himself.

III. — Another argument for the Cretan habitudes of Homer, is derived from his allusion to the Cretan tumblers — the κυβιστητῆρες — the most whimsical, perhaps, in the world; and to this hour the practice continues unaltered as in the eldest days. The description is easily understood. Two men place themselves side by side; one stands upright in his natural posture; the other stands on his head. Of course this latter would be unable to keep his feet aloft, and in the place belonging to his head, were it not that his comrade throws his arms round his ankles, so as to sustain his legs inverted in the air. Thus placed, they begin to roll forward, head over heels, and heels over head: every tumble inverts their positions: but always there is one man, after each roll, standing upright on his pins, and another whose lower extremities are presented to the clouds. And thus they go on for hours. The performance obviously requires two associates; or, if the number were increased, it must still be by pairs; and accordingly Homer describes *his* tumbles as in the dual number.

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IV. — A fourth, and most remarkable, among the Homeric mementos of Cretan life, is the τηλολαλια — or conversation from a distance. This it is, and must have been, which suggested to Homer his preternatural male voices — Stentor's, for instance, who spoke as loud 'as other fifty men;' and that of Achilles, whom Patroclus roused up with a long pole, like a lion from his lair, to come out and roar at the Trojans; simply by which roar he scares the whole Trojan army. Now, in Crete, and from Colonel Leake, it appears, in Albania, (where we believe that Cretan emigrants have settled,) shepherds and others are found with voices so resonant, aided perhaps by the quality of a Grecian atmosphere, that they are able to challenge a person 'out of sight;' and will actually conduct a ceremonious conversation (for all Cretan mountaineers are as ceremonious as the Homeric heroes) at distances which to us seem incredible. What distance? demands a litigious reader. Why, our own countrymen, modest and veracious, decline to state what they have not measured, or even had the means of computing. They content themselves with saying, that sometimes their guide, from the midst of a solitary valley, would shout aloud to the public in general — taking his chance of any strollers from that great body, though quite out of sight, chancing to be within mouth-shot. But the French are not so scrupulous. M. Zallony, in his *Voyage à l'Archipel*, &c., says, that some of the Greek islanders 'ont la voix forte et animée; et deux habitans, à une distance d'une demi-lieue, même plus, peuvent très facilement s'entrendre, et quelquefois s'entretenir.' Now a royal league is hard upon three English miles, and a sea league, we believe, is two and

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a half; so that half a league, *et même plus*, would bring us near to two miles, which seems a long interval at which to conduct a courtship. But this reminds us of an English farmer in the north, who certainly did regularly call in his son to dinner from a place two measured miles distant; and the son certainly came. How far this punctuality, however, might depend on the father's request, or on the son's watch, was best known to the interested party. In Crete, meantime, and again, no doubt, from atmospheric advantages, the τηλοσκοπια, or power of descrying remote objects by the eye, is carried to an extent that seems incredible. This faculty also may be called Homeric; for Homer repeatedly alludes to it.

V.—But the legends and mythology of Crete are what most detect the intercourse of Homer with that island. A volume would be requisite for the full illustration of this truth. It will be sufficient here to remind the reader of the early civilization, long anterior to that of Greece continental, which Crete had received. That premature refinement furnished an *à priori* argument for supposing that Homer would resort to Crete; and inversely, the elaborate Homeric use of Cretan traditional fables, furnishes an *à posteriori* argument that Homer *did* seek this Island.

It is of great use towards any full Homeric investigation, that we should fix Homer's locality and trace his haunts; for locality, connected with the internal indications of the *Iliad*, is the best means of approximating to Homer's true era; as on the other hand, Homer's era, if otherwise deduced, would assist the indications of the *Iliad* to determine his locality. And

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if any reader demands in a spirit of mistrust, How it is that Crete, so harassed by intestine wars from Turkish, Venetian, and recently from Egyptian tyranny, the bloodiest and most exterminating, has been able, through three thousand years, to keep up unbroken her inheritance of traditions? we reply, That the same cause has protected the Cretan usages, which (since the days of our friend Pandarus) has protected the Cretan ibex; viz. the physical conformation of the island — mountains; secret passes where one resolute band of two hundred men is equal to an army; ledges of rock which a mule cannot tread with safety; crags where even infantry must break and lose their cohesion; and the blessedness of rustic poverty, which offers no temptation to the marauder. These have been the Cretan safeguards; and a brave Sfakian population, by many degrees the finest of all Grecian races in their persons and their hearts.

The main point about Homer, the man, which now remains to be settled, amongst the many that might be useful, and the few that are recoverable, is this — *Could he write?* and if he could, did he use that method for fixing his thoughts and images as they arose? or did he trust to his own memory for the rough sketch, and to the chanters for publishing the revised copies?

This question, however, as it will again meet us under the head *Solon and the Pisistratidæ*, we shall defer to that section; and we shall close this personal section on Homer by one remark borrowed from Plato. The reader will have noticed that, amongst the cities pretending to Homer as a native child, stands the city of Argus. Now Plato, by way of putting a summary

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end to all such windy pretensions from Dorian cities, introduces in one of his dialogues a stranger who remarks, as a leading characteristic of Homer — that everywhere he keeps the reader moving amongst scenes, images and usages, which reflect the forms and coloring of Ionian life. This remark is important, and we shall use it in our summing up.

PART II.

THE ILIAD.

What is the *Iliad* about? What is the true and proper subject of the *Iliad*? If that could be settled, it would facilitate our inquiry. Now everybody knows, that according to the ordinary notion, founded upon the opening lines of this poem, the subject is the *Wrath of Achilles*. Others, however, have thought, with some reason, that the idea was not sufficiently self-diffusive — was not all-pervasive: it seemed a ligament that passed through some parts of the poem, and connected them intimately, but missed others altogether. It has, therefore, become a serious question — How much of the *Iliad* is really interveined, or at all modified, by the son of Peleus, and his feud with Agamemnon? To settle which, a German Jew took a singular method.

We have all heard of that barbarous prince, (the story is told of several,) who, in order to decide territorial pretensions between himself and a brother potentate, sent for a large map of the world; and from this, with a pair of scissors, cutting out the rival states, carefully weighed them against each other, in gold

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scales. We see no reason for laughing at the prince; for, the paper being presumed of equal thickness, the map accurate, and on a large scale, the result would exhibit the truth in a palpable shape. Probably on this hint it was, that the Jew cut out of a Greek *Iliad* every line that could be referred to Achilles and his wrath — not omitting even the debates of Olympus, where they grew out of that. And what was his report? Why, that the wrath of Achilles formed only '26 per shent' upon the whole *Iliad;* that is, in effect, one quarter of the poem.

Thus far, therefore, we must concede to the *Chorizontes*, or breakers-up of the *Iliad*, that the original stem on which the *Iliad* grew was probably an *Achilleis;* for it is inconceivable that Homer himself could have expected such a rope of sand as the Iliad *now* presents, to preserve its order and succession under the rough handling of posterity. Watch the fate of any intricate machine in any private family. All the loose or detached parts of such a machine are sure to be lost. Ask for it at the end of a year, and the more elaborate was the machine, so much the more certain is the destruction which will have overtaken it. It is only when any compound whole, whether engine, poem, or tale, carries its several parts absolutely interlocked with its own substance, that it has a chance of maintaining its integrity.

Now, certainly it cannot be argued by the most idolatrous lover of the *Iliad*, that the main central books exhibit that sort of natural intercohesion which *determines* their place and order. But, says the reader, here they are; they *have* held together: no use in asking whether it was natural for them to hold together.

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They *have* reached us: it is now past asking — Could Homer expect them to reach us? Yes, they *have* reached us; but since when? Not, probably, in their present arrangement, from an earlier period than that of Pisistratus. When manuscripts had once become general, it might be easy to preserve even the loosest succession of parts — especially where great veneration for the author, and the general notoriety of the poems, would secure the fidelity of copies. But what the sceptics require to be enlightened upon, is the principle of cohesion which could carry these loose parts of the *Iliad* over that gulf of years between Homer and Pisistratus — the one a whole millennium before our Christian era, the other little more than half a millennium; and whilst traditionary transmission through singers and harpers constituted, perhaps, the sole means of preservation, and therefore of arrangement.

Let not the reader suppose German scepticism to be the sole reason for jealousy with regard to the present canon of the *Iliad*. On the contrary, *some* interpolations are confessed by all parties. For instance, it is *certain* — and even Eustathius records it as a regular tradition in Greece — that the night-adventure of Diomed and Ulysses against the Trojan camp, their capture of the beautiful horses brought by Rhesus, and of Dolon the Trojan spy, did not originally form a part of the *Iliad*. At present this adventure forms the tenth book, but previously it had been an independent *epos*, or epic narrative, perhaps locally circulated amongst the descendants of Diomed,* and known by

* *Descendants*, or perhaps, amongst the worshippers; for, though everybody is not aware of that fact, many of the Grecian

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the title of the *Doloneia*. Now, if one such intercalation could pass, why not more? With respect to this particular night episode, it has been remarked, that its place in the series is not asserted by any *internal* indication. There is an allusion, indeed, to the wrath of Achilles; but probably introduced to harmonize it as a part of the *Iliad*, by the same authority which introduced the poem itself: else, the whole book may be dropped out without any *hiatus*. The battle, suggested by Diomed at the end of the ninth Book, takes place in the eleventh; and, as the critics remark, no allusion is made in that eleventh book, by any of the Grecian chiefs, to the remarkable plot of the intervening night.

But of all the incoherences which have been detected in the *Iliad*, as arising out of arbitrary juxtapositions between parts not originally related, the most amusing is that brought to light by the late Wilhelm Mueller. 'It is a fact,' says he, 'that (as the arrangement now stands) Ulysses is not ashamed to attend three dinner parties on one evening.' First, he had a dinner engagement with Agamemnon, which, of course, he keeps, [B. IX. 90;] so prudent a man could

heroes at Troy were deified. Ulysses and his wife, Idomeneus, &c., assume even a mystical place in the subsequent superstitions of Greece. But Diomed also became a god: and the occasion was remarkable. A peerage (*i. e.* a godship) had been promised by the gods to his father Tydeus; but when the patent came to be enrolled, a flaw was detected — it was found that Tydeus had once eaten part of a man! What was to be done? The objection was fatal; no cannibal could be a god, though a god might be a cannibal. Tydeus therefore requested Jove to settle the reversion on his son Diomed. 'And *that*,' said Jove, 'I shall have great pleasure in doing.'

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not possibly neglect an invitation from the commander of the forces. Even in free and independent England, the sovereign does not *ask* you to dinner, but *commands* your attendance. Next he dines with Achilles, [B. IX. 221;] and finally with Diomed, [B. XI. 578.] Now, Diomed was a swell of the first magnitude, and a man of fashion, as may be seen in the 'Troilus and Cressida' of Shakspeare, (who took his character from tradition, and makes him the Greek rival of Troilus.) He therefore pushes his dinner as far towards 'to-morrow' as was well possible; so that it is near morning before that dinner is over. And the sum of the Ithacan's enormities is thus truly stated by Mueller: — 'Deny it who will, the son of Laertes accepts three distinct feeds, between the sunset suppose of Monday and the dawn of Tuesday!'

This is intolerable. Yet, perhaps, apologists will say, (for some people will varnish anything,) 'If the man had three dinners in one day, often, perhaps, in three days he had but one dinner!' For ourselves, we frankly confess, that if there is one man in the Grecian camp whom we should have believed capable of such a thing, it is precisely this cunning Ulysses. Mueller insists on calling him the 'noble' Ulysses; but that is only to blacken his conduct about the dinners. To our thinking, his nearest representative in modern times is 'Sixteen-string Jack,' whose life may be read in the 'Newgate Calendar.' What most amuses ourselves in the business is Mueller's so stealthily pursuing Ulysses through two books of the 'Iliad,' in order to watch how many dinner parties he attended! And there is a good moral in the whole discovery; for it shows all knaves, that, though hidden

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for three thousand years, their tricks are sure to be found out at the last.

In general, it is undeniable that some of the German objections to the present arrangement, as a possible Homeric arrangement, are valid. For instance, the following, against the present position of the duel between Paris and Menelaus: — 'This duel, together with the perfidious shot of Pandarus, and the general engagement which follows, all belonging to the same *epos*, wear the appearance of being perfectly insulated where they now stand, and betray no sort of connection with any of the succeeding cantos. In the Ἀριστεια Διομηδους, which forms the fifth canto, the whole incident is forgotten, and is never revived. The Grecians make no complaint of the treachery practised; nor do the gods (*ex officio* the avengers of perjury) take any steps to punish it. Not many hours after the duel, Hector comes to his brother's residence; but neither of them utters one word about the recent duel; and as little about what had happened since the duel, though necessarily unknown to Paris. Hector's reproaches, again, to Paris, for his *lâcheté*, are in manifest contradiction to the single combat which he had so recently faced. Yet Paris takes no notice whatever of the energy manifested by himself. And as to his final evasion, *that* was no matter of reproach to him, since it was the work of a goddess. Besides, when he announces his intention to Hector of going again to the field of battle, who would not anticipate from him a proposal for re-establishing the interrupted duel? Yet not a syllable of all that. Now, with these broad indications to direct our eyes upon the truth, can we doubt that the duel, in connection with the breach of

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truce, and all that now fills the third and fourth books' — [in a foot note Mueller adds — 'and also the former half of the second book'] — 'originally composed an independent *epos*, which belonged, very probably, to an earlier stage of the Trojan war, and was first thrust by the authorized arrangers of the "Iliad," into the unhappy place it now occupies; namely, in the course of a day already far overcrowded with events?'

In the notes, where Mueller replies to some objections, he again insists upon the impossibility, under the supposition that Homer had authorized the present arrangement, of his never afterwards making the Greeks allude to the infraction of the treaty; especially when Hector proposes a second duel between himself and some one of the Grecian chiefs. Yet, perhaps, as regards this particular feature (namely, the treachery) of the duel, we would suggest, that, as the interposition of Venus is not to be interpreted in any foolish allegorical way, (for the battle interferences of the gods are visible and undisguised,) doubtless the Greeks, not less than the Trojans, understood the interruption as in effect divine; after which, the act of Pandarus is covered by the general apology, no matter in what light Pandarus might have meant it. Even in the first 'Iliad,' it is most childish to understand the whispering of Minerva to Achilles as an allegorical way of expressing, that his good sense, or his prudence arrested his hand. Nonsense! that is not Homer's style of thinking, nor the style of Homeric ages. Where Mars, upon being wounded, howls, and, instead of licking the man who offered him this insult, shows the white feather and limps off in confusion, do these critics imagine an allegory?

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What is an allegoric howl? or what does a cur sneaking from a fight indicate symbollically? The Homeric simplicity speaks plainly enough. Venus finds that her man is likely to be beaten; which, by the way, surprises us; for a stout young shepherd, like Paris, ought to have found no trouble in taking the conceit out of an elderly diner-out, such as Menelaus. And, perhaps, with his mauleys, he would. Finding, however, how the affair was likely to go, Venus withdraws her man. Paris does not come to time; the umpires quarrel; the mob breaks the ring; and a battle royal ensues. But the interference of Venus must have been palpable: and this is one of the circumstances in the 'Iliad' which satisfies us, that the age of Troy was removed by several generations from Homer. To elder days, and men fancied more heroic than those of his own day — (a fancy which Homer expressly acknowledges) — he might find himself inclined to ascribe a personal intercourse with the gods; and he would find everywhere an audience favoring this belief. A generation of men that often rose themselves to divine honors, might readily be conceived to mix personally with the gods. But no man could think thus of his own contemporaries, of whom he must know that the very best were liable to indigestion, and suspected often to have schirrous livers. Really no: a dyspeptic demigod it makes one dyspeptic to think of!

Meantime the duel of Paris is simply overlooked and neglected in the subsequent books of the Iliad: it is nowhere absolutely contradicted by implication: but other cases have been noticed in the Iliad, which involve direct contradictions, and therefore argue either

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that Homer in those 'naps' which Horace imputes to him slumbered too profoundly, or that counterfeits got mixed up with the true bullion of the Iliad. Amongst other examples pointed out by Heyne or by Tranceson, the following deserve notice :

1. Pylæmenes the Paphlagonian, is killed by Menelaus, (*Il.* v. 579 – 590;) but further on (*Il.* xiii. 643 – 658) we find the poor man pretty well in his health, and chief mourner at the funeral of his son Harpalion.

2. Sarpedon is wounded in the leg by Tlepolemus, (*Il.* v. 628, &c.) and an ugly wound it is, for the bone is touched, so that an operation might be looked for. Operation, indeed! Two days after he is stumping about upon his pins, and 'operating' upon other people, (*Il.* xii. 290, &c.) The contradiction, if it really is one, was not found out until the approved chronology of the Iliad was settled. Our reason for doubting about the contradiction is simply this : Sarpedon, if we remember, was a son of Jupiter; and Jupiter might have a particular salve for wounded legs.

Teucer, however, was an undeniable mortal. Yet he (*Il.* viii. 324) is wounded desperately in the arm by Hector. His *neuré* is smashed, which generally is taken to mean his bow-string; but some surgical critics understand it as the sinew of his arm. At all events it was no trifle; his brother, Telamonian Ajax, and two other men, carry off the patient groaning heartily, probably upon a shutter, to the hospital. He at last is booked for the doctor, you think. Not at all. Next morning he is abroad on the field of battle, and at his old trade of thumping respectable men, (*Il.* xii. 387.)

4. The history of Vulcan, and his long day's tumble

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from the sky, in. *Il*, I. 586, does not harmonize with the account of the same accident in *Il.* XIX. 394.

5. As an inconsistency not in the Iliad internally, but between the Iliad and the Odyssey, it has often been noticed, that in the former this same Vulcan is married to Venus, whilst in the Odyssey his wife is one of the Graces.

'As upon earth,' says Mueller, 'so in Olympus, the fable of the Iliad is but loosely put together; and we are not to look for any very severe succession of motives and results, of promises and performances, even amongst the gods. In the first Iliad, Thetis receives a Jovian guarantee (viz. Jove's authentic nod) on behalf of her offended son Achilles, that he will glorify him in a particular way, and the way was by making the Trojans victorious, until the Grecians should see their error, and propitiate the irritated hero. Mindful of his promise, Jove disposes Agamemnon, by a delusive dream, to lead out the Grecian host to battle. At this point, however, Thetis, Achilles, and the ratifying nod, appear at once to be blown thereby out of the Jovian remembrance. The duel between Paris and Menelaus takes place, and the abrupt close of that duel by Venus, apparently with equal indifference on Jove's part to either incident. Even at the general meeting of the gods in the fourth book, there is no renewal of the proposal for the glorifying of Achilles. It is true that Jove, from old attachments, would willingly deliver the strong-hold of Priam from ruin, and lead the whole feud to some peaceful issue. But the passionate female divinities, Juno and Minerva, triumph over his moderation, and the destruction of Troy is finally determined. Now, grant that Jove

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wanted firmness for meeting the furious demands of the goddesses, by a candid confession of his previous promise to Thetis, still we might have looked for some intimation that this degradation of himself in the eyes of a confiding suppliant had cost him a struggle. But no; nothing of the kind. In the next great battle the Trojans are severely pressed, and the Greeks are far enough from feeling any regret for the absence of Achilles. Nay, as if expressly to show that Achilles was *not* wanted, Diomed turns out a trump of the first magnitude; and a son of Priam describes him pointedly as more terrific than Pelides, the goddess-born! And, indeed, it was time to retreat before the man who had wounded Mars, making him yell with pain, and howl like "ten thousand mortals." This Mars, however — he at least must have given some check to the advancing Greeks? True, he had so; but not as fulfilling any Jovian counsels, which, on the contrary, tend rather to the issue of this god's being driven out of the Trojan ranks. First of all, in the eighth book, Jove steps forward to guide the course of war, and with remembrance of his promise to Thetis, he forbids peremptorily both gods and goddesses to interfere on either side; and he seats himself on Mount Ida to overlook the field of battle, threatening to the Greeks, by his impartial scales, a preponderance of calamity. From this review, it appears tolerably certain, that the third to the seventh book belong to no *epos* that could have been dedicated to the glory of Achilles. The wrath of that hero, his reconciliation, and his return to battle, having been announced in the opening as the theme of the poem, are used as a connecting link for holding together all the cantos about other heroes

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which had been intercalated between itself and the close; but this tie is far too slack; and one rude shake makes all the alien parts tumble out.'

TIME OF THE ILIAD. — Next let us ask, as a point very important towards investigating the succession and possible *nexus* of the events, what is the duration — the compass of time — through which the action of the poem revolves? This has been of old a disputed point; and many are the different 'diaries' which have been abstracted by able men during the last two centuries. Bossu made the period of the whole to be forty-seven days; Wood (in the earliest edition) forty; and a calculation in the *Memoirs de Trevoux* (May, 1708) carries it up to forty-nine. But the *computus* now finally adopted, amended, and ruled irreversibly, is that of Heyne, (as given in a separate *Excursus*,) countersigned by Wolf; this makes the number to be fifty-two; but, with a subsequent correction for an obvious oversight of Heyne's, fifty-one.

'Book I. — Nine days the plague rages, (v. 53.) On the tenth Achilles calls a meeting of the staff officers. What occurs in that meeting subsequently occasions his mother's visit. She tells him, (v. 422,) that Jove had set off the day before to a festival of the Ethiopians, and is not expected back in less than twelve days. From this we gather, that the visit of Thetis to Jove (v. 493) must be transplanted to the twenty-first day. With this day terminates the first book, which contains, therefore, twenty-one days.

'Book II. up to v. 293 of Book VII., comprehends a single day — viz. the twenty-second.

'Book VII. (v. 381, 421, and 432,) the twenty-third day.

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'Book VII. (v. 433–465,) the twenty-fourth day.

'Book VIII. up to the close of Book X., the twenty-fifth day and the succeeding night.

'Book XI. up to the close of Book XVIII., the twenty-sixth day.

'Book XIX. to v. 201 of Book XXIII., the twenty-seventh day, with the succeeding night.

'Book XXIII. (v. 109–225,) the twenty-eighth day.

'Book XXIII. (v. 226 to the end,) the twenty-ninth day.

'Book XXIV. — Eleven days long Achilles trails the corpse of Hector round the sepulchre of Patroclus. On the twelfth day a meeting is called of the gods; consequently on the thirty-ninth day of the general action; for this indignity to the dead body of Hector, must be dated from the day of his death, which is the twenty seventh of the entire poem. On the same thirty-ninth day, towards evening, the body is ransomed by Priam, and during the night is conveyed to Troy. With the morning of the following day, viz. the fortieth, the venerable king returns to Troy; and the armistice of eleven days, which had been concluded with Achilles, is employed in mourning for Hector during nine days, and in preparing his funeral. On the tenth of these days takes place the burning of the body, and the funeral banquet. On the eleventh is celebrated the solemn interment of the remains, and the raising of the sepulchral mound. With the twelfth recommences the war.

'Upon this deduction, the entire Iliad is found to revolve within the space of fifty-one days. Heyne's misreckoning is obvious: he had summed up the eleven days of the corpse-trailing, as a clear addition, by just so much, to the twenty-seven previous days; whereas

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the twenty-seventh of those days coincides with the first of the trailing, and is thus counted twice over in effect.'

This *computus*, in the circumstantial detail here presented, is due to Wilhelm Mueller. But substantially, it is guaranteed by numerous scholars. And, as to Heyne's little blunder, corrected by Wolf, it is nothing, for we have ourselves known a Quaker, and a celebrated bank, to make an error of the same amount, in computing the number of days to run upon a bill at six weeks. But we soon 'wolfed' them into better arithmetic, upon finding that the error was against ourselves.

NAME OF THE ILIAD. — What follows is our own suggestion. We offer it as useful towards our final judgment, in which we shall pronounce firmly upon the site of Homer, as not *essentially* altered; as being *true and very Homer* to this day — that same Homer who was raised into a state property by Pisistratus in 555 B. C.; who was passionately revered by Pericles in 444 B. C.; who was idolized and consecrated by Alexander in 333 B. C. When first arose the *Iliad*? This we cannot now determine: but so much we know, that the eldest author now surviving, in whom that designation occurs as a regular familiar word, is Herodotus; and he was contemporary with Pericles. Herodotus must be considered as the senior author in that great period of Athenian splendor, as Plato and Xenophon were the junior. Herodotus, therefore, might have seen Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, if that prince had not been cut off prematurely by jacobinical daggers. It is, therefore, probable in a high degree, that the name *Iliad* was already familiar to

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Pisistratus; first, because it is so used by Herodotus as to imply that it was no novelty at that time; secondly, because he who first gathered the entire series of Trojan legends into artificial unity, would be the first to require an expression for that unity. The collector would be the first to want a collective title. Solon, therefore, or Pisistratus, no matter which, did (as we finally believe) first gather the whole cycle of Iliac romances into one body. And to this aggregate whole, he gave the name of *Ilias*. But why? in what sense? Not for any purpose of deception, small or great. Were that notion once admitted, then we open a door to all sorts of licentious conjectures. Consciously authorizing one falsehood, there is no saying where he would have stopped. But there was no falsehood. Pisistratus, whose original motive for stirring in such an affair, could have been only love and admiration, was not the author, but the sworn foe of adulteration. It was to prevent changes, not to sanction them, that he could ever have interposed with the state authority. And what then did he mean by calling these collected poems the *Iliad*? He meant precisely what a man would now mean, who should publish a body of ancient romances relating to the round table or to Charlemagne, or to the Crusades; not implying, by any unity in the title, that these romances were all one man's work, or several parts of one individual whole, but that they related to one terminal object. The unity implied, would lie not in the mind conceiving, nor in the *nexus* of the several divisions, but in the community of subject. As when we call the five books of Moses by the name of Pentateuch, we do not assert any unity running through

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these books, as though one took up the subject where another left off; for, in reality, some parts are purely historical, some purely legislative. But we mean that all, whether record of fact, or record of institution and precept, bear upon one object — the founding a separate nation as the depository of truth, and elaborately, therefore, kept from blending with Pagans. On the one hand, therefore, we concede to the sceptics, that several independent poems (though still by possibility from the same author) were united by Pisistratus. But on the other hand, we deny any fraud in this — we deny that the name *Iliad* was framed to disguise this independence. Some had a closer *nexus* than others. But what Pisistratus says, is this: — Behold a series of poems, all ancient; all from Homeric days; and (whether Homer's or not) all relating to the great crusade against *Ilium*.

SOLON AND PISISTRATUS.

What was it, service or injury, that these men did to Homer? No one question, in the whole series of Homeric questions, is more perplexing. Homer did a great service to them; if tradition is right, to *both* of them; — viz. by settling a legal dispute for each; so that it was a knavish return for such national benefits, if they — if these two Athenian statesmen — went about to undermine that text from which they had reaped such singular fruits in their own administration. But we are sure they did no such thing: they were both gentlemen — both scholars. Yet something, certainly, they must have done to Homer: in that point all are agreed: but what it was remains a mystery to this hour. Every man is entitled to his opin-

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ion; we to ours; which in some corner or other we shall whisper into the private ear of the public, and into the public ear of our private friends.

The first thing which puzzles every man of reflection, when he hears of this anecdote, is — the extraordinary coincidence that two great lawgivers, at different eras, should both interest themselves in a poet; and not only so, but the particular two who faced and confronted each other in the same way that any leader of English civilization (Alfred suppose) might be imagined as facing and confronting any leader (Charlemagne suppose) of French civilization. For Christian Europe, the names France and England are by analogy what for Greece were the names Sparta and Athens; we mean, as respects the two great features of permanent rivalship and permanent leadership. From the moment when they were regularly organized by law and institutions, Athens and Sparta became the two counterforces of Greece. About 800 B. C., Lycurgus draws up a system of laws for Sparta; more than two centuries later, Solon draws up a system of laws for Athens. And most unaccountably, each of these political leaders takes upon him, not passively as a private literary citizen, to admire the Homeric poems — *that* might be natural in men of high birth enjoying the selectest advantages of education — but actually to privilege Homer, to place him on the *matricula* of denizens, to consecrate his name, and to set in motion the whole machinery of government on behalf of his poems. Wherefor, and for what purpose? On the part of Lycurgus, for a purpose well-known and appreciated, viz. to use the *Iliad* as the basis of public instruction, and thus mediately as the basis of a

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warlike morality — but on the part of Solon, for no purpose ever yet ascertained. Strangely enough, from the literary land, and from the later period, we do not learn the 'how' and the 'why;' from the gross illiterate land and the short period, we *do*.

What Lycurgus did was rather for an interest of Greece than for any interest of Homer. The order of his thoughts was not, as has been supposed — 'I love Homer; and I will show my love by making Sparta co-operate in extending his influence;' no, but this — 'I love Sparta; and I will show my love by making Homer co-operate with the martial foundations of the land; I will introduce a martial poem like the *Iliad*, to operate through public education and through public festivals.' For Solon, on the other hand, Homer must have been a final object; no means towards something else, but an end *per se*. Doubtless, Solon, as little as Lycurgus, could be indifferent to the value of this popular poem for his own professional objects. But, practically, it is not likely that Solon could find any opening for Homeric services in that direction. Precisely those two causes which would ensure to Solon a vast superiority to Lycurgus in all modes of intellectual liberality, viz. his chronologic period and his country, must have also caused that the whole ground would be pre-occupied. For education, for popular influence, Athens would have already settled upon Homer all the dowry of distinction which Solon might risk to settle. Athens surely in the sixth century B. C., if Sparta in the ninth.

At this point our suspicions revolve upon us. That the two vanward potentates of Greece — Athens and Sparta — should each severally ascribe to her own

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greatest lawgiver separate Homeric labor, looks too much like the Papal heraldries of European sovereigns: all the great ones are presumed to have rendered a characteristic service to the church. 'Are you the most Christian? Be it so; but I am the most Catholic; and my brother here is the most faithful, or Defender of the Faith.' 'Was Homer, do you say, an Ionian? And did Athens first settle his text? With all my heart: and we Dorians might seem to have no part in that inheritance; being rather asinine in our literary character; but for all that, Dorian as he was, you cannot deny that my countryman, Lycurgus, first introduced Homer upon the continent of Greece.' Indeed the Spartans had a craze about the *Iliad*, as though it bore some special relation to themselves: for Plutarch mentions it as a current saying in Sparta — that Hesiod was the poet for Helots, (and in a lower key perhaps they added — for some other people beside;) since, according to his poetry, the end of man's existence is — to plough and to harrow; but Homer, said they, is the Spartan poet; since the moral of the *Iliad* proclaims — that the whole duty of man lies in fighting.

Meantime, though it cannot be denied that these repeated attempts in Greek statesmen to connect themselves with Homer by some capital service, certainly *do* look too much like the consequent attempts of western nations to connect their ancestries with Troy — still there seems to be good historic authority for each of the cases separately. Or, if any case were suspicious, it would be that of Lycurgus. Solon, the legislatorial founder of Athens — the Pisistratidæ or final princes of Athens — these great men, it is unde-

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niable, *did* link their names with Homer: each and all by specific services. What services? what could be the service of Solon? Or, after Solon, what service *could* remain for Pisistratus?

A conceited Frenchman pretended to think that history, to be read beneficially, ought to be read backwards, *i. e.* in an order inverse to the chronological succession of events. This absurd rule might, in the present case, be applied with benefit. Pisistratus and his son Hipparchus stand last in the order of Homeric modifiers. Now if we ascertain what it was that they *did*, this may show us what it was that their predecessors did *not* do; and to that extent it will narrow the range from which we have to select the probable functions of those predecessors.

What then was the particular service to Homer by which Pisistratus and his son made themselves so famous? The best account of this is contained in an obscure *grammaticus* or *litterateur*, one Diomedes, no small fool, who thus tells his tale: — 'The poems of Homer, in process of time, were it by fire, by flood, by earthquake, had come near to extinction; they had not absolutely perished, but they were continually coming near to that catastrophe by wide dispersion. From this dispersion it arose naturally that one place possessed a hundred Homeric books; some second place a thousand; some third place a couple of hundreds; and the Homeric poetry was fast tending to oblivion. In that conjuncture there occurred to Pisistratus, who ruled at Athens about 555 years B. C., the following scheme: — With the double purpose of gaining glory for himself and preservation for Homer, he dispersed a notification through Greece, that every man

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who possessed any Homeric fragments, was to deliver them into Athenian hands at a fixed rate of compensation. The possessors naturally hastened to remit their *quotas*, and were honestly paid. Indeed, Pisistratus did not reject even those contributors who presented verses already sent in by another; to these also he paid the stipulated price, without any discount at all. And by this means it happened that oftentimes he recovered, amongst a heap of repetitions, one, two, or more verses that were new. At length this stage of the labor was completed; all the returns from every quarter had come in. Then it was that Pisistratus summoned seventy men of letters, at salaries suitable to their pretensions, as critical assessors upon these poems; giving to each man separately a copy of the lines collected by himself, with the commission of arranging them according to his individual judgment. When the commissioners had closed their labors, Pisistratus reassembled them, and called upon each man separately to exhibit his own result. This having been done, the general voice, in mere homage to merit and the truth, unanimously pronounced the revisions of Aristarchus and Zenodotus to be the best; and after a second collation between these two, the edition of Aristarchus was found entitled to the palm.'

Now the reader must not allow himself to be repelled by the absurd anachronisms of this account, which brings Pisistratus of the sixth century B. C., face to face with Aristarchus of the third; nor must he allow too much weight to the obvious plagiarism from the old marvellous legend of the seventy-two Jewish translators. That very legend shows him how possible it is for a heap of falsehood, and even miracles,

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to be embroidered upon a story which, after all, is true in its main texture. We all know it to be true, in spite of the fables engrafted upon the truth, that under the patronage of a Macedonian prince, seventy-two learned Jews really *were* assembled at Alexandria, and *did* make that Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which, from the number of the translators, we still call the *Septuagint*. And so we must suppose this ignorant Diomedes, though embellishing the story according to his slender means, still to have built upon old traditions. Even the rate of payment has been elsewhere recorded; by which it appears that 'penny-a-liners' (of whom we hear so much in our day) existed also for early Athens.

If this legend were accurate even in its commencement, it would put down Plato's story, that the Homeric poems were first brought to Athens by Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus; and it would put down the mere possibility that Solon, thirty or forty years earlier than either, had ever intermeddled with those poems. But, if we adopt the tradition about Lycurgus, or even if we reject it, we must believe that copies of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (that is, *quoad* the substance, not *quoad* the present arrangement) existed in Athens long before the Pisistratidæ, or even Solon. Were it only through the *Rhapsodoi*, or musical reciters of the Homeric poems, both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* must have been known many a long year before Pisistratus; or else we undertake to say they would never have been known at all. For, in a maritime city like Athens, communicating so freely with Ionia and with all insular Greece, so constitutionally gay besides, how is it possible to suppose that the fine old poetic romances

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chanted to the accompaniment of harps, about the paladins of Greece, could be unknown or unwelcomed, unless by supposing them non-existent? If they lurked anywhere, they would assuredly float across these sunny seas of the Ægean to Athens; that city which, in every age, (according to Milton, *Par. Reg.*) was equally '*native* to famous wits' and '*hospitable*' — that is, equally fertile in giving birth to men of genius itself, and forward to welcome those of foreign states.

Throughout this story of Diomedes, disfigured as it is, we may read that the labors of Pisistratus were applied to *written* copies. That is a great point in advance. And instantly it reacts upon Solon, as a means of approximating to the nature of *his* labors. If (as one German writer holds) Solon was the very first person to take down the *Iliad* in writing, from the recitations of the *Rhapsodoi*, then it would seem that this step had suggested to Pisistratus the further improvement of collating Solon's written copy with such partial copies, or memorials, or recollections of reciters, as would be likely to exist in many different parts of Greece, amongst families or cities tracing their descent from particular heroes of the *Iliad*. If, on the other hand, Pisistratus was the first man who matured a written copy, what will then remain open to Solon for *his* share in the play? This; viz. that he applied some useful check to the exorbitancies of the musical rehearsers. The famous Greek words, still surviving in Plato and Diogenes Laertius, support this notion. The words must be true, though they may be obscure. They must involve the fact, though they may conceal it. What are they? Let us review

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them. To chant ἐξ ὑπολήψεως — and to chant ἐξ ὑποβολῆς — these were the new regulations introduced by Solon and his successor. Now, what is the meaning of ὑπολήψις? The commonest sense of the word is — *opinion*. Thus, on the title-page of Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, stands, as a general motto, Παντα ὑπολήψις, 'All things are matters of opinion.' This, however, is a sense which will not answer. Another and rarer sense is — *succession*. And the way in which the prepositions ὑπο and *sub* are used by the ancients to construct the idea of succession, (a problem which Dr. Parr failed to solve,) is by supposing such a case as the slated roof of a house. Were the slates simply contiguous by their edges, the rain would soon show that their succession was not perfect. But, by making each to underlap the other, the series is made virtually perfect. In this way, the word came to be used for *succession*. And, applied to the chanters, it must have meant that, upon some great occasion periodically recurring, they were obliged by the new law to pursue the entire series of the several rhapsodies composing the *Iliad*, and not to pick and choose, as heretofore, with a view to their own convenience, or to local purposes. But what was the use of this? We presume that it had the same object in view as the rubric of the English church, (we believe also of the Jewish synagogue,) in arranging the succession of lessons appointed for each day's service; viz. to secure the certainty that, within a known period of time, the whole of the canonical books should be read once through from beginning to end. The particular purpose is of our own suggestion; but the fact itself is placed beyond all doubt. Plato says, that the chanters

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were obliged, at the great Panathenaic festival, to recite the *Iliad* ἐξ ὑπολήψεως ἐφεξῆς; where the first expression (ἐξ ὑπολήψεως) applies to the persons, the second (ἐφεξῆς) to the poem.

The popular translation would be — that they were obliged, by relieving each other, or by regular relays of chanters, to recite the whole poem in its order, by succession of party, from beginning to end. This very story is repeated by an orator still extant not long after Plato. And in his case there is no opening to doubt, for he does not affirm the story, he assumes it, and recalls it to the people's attention as a thing notorious to them all. The other expression ἐξ ὑποβολῆς or ὑποβληδήν has occasioned some disputing; but why, we cannot conjecture. If ever there was a word whose meaning is certain in a position like this, that word is ὑποβαλλω, with its derivatives. And we are confounded at hearing that less than a Boeckh would not suffice to prove that the ἐξ ὑποβολῆς means, 'by way of suggestion,' 'under the condition of being prompted.' The meaning of which is evident: a state copy of the *Iliad*, however it was obtained by Solon, a canon of the Homeric text, was confided to a prompter, whose duty was to check the slightest deviation from this authorized standard, to allow of no shortenings, omissions, or flattering alterations. In this sense the two regulations support and check each other. One provides for quantity, the other for quality. One secures the whole shall be recited; the other secures the fidelity of this whole. And here again comes in the story of Salamis to give us the 'why' and the 'wherefore' of these new regulations. If a legal or international question about Salamis had just been decided by the mere au-

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thority of a passage in the *Iliad*, it was high time for statesmen to look about them, and to see that a poem, which was thus solemnly adjudged to be good evidence in the supreme courts of law, should have its text authenticated. And in fact, several new cases (see Eustathius on the second *Iliad*,) were decided not long after on the very same Homeric evidence.

But does not this prompter's copy presuppose a complete manuscript of the *Iliad*? Most certainly it does; and the question is left to the reader, whether this in fact was the service by which Pisistratus followed up and completed the service of Solon, (as to going through the whole *Iliad*;) or whether both services were due to Solon; in which case it will become necessary to look out for some new idea of the service that could remain open to Pisistratus.

Towards that idea, let us ask universally what services *could* be rendered by a statesman in that age to a poem situated as the *Iliad*? Such a man might restore; might authenticate; might assemble; might arrange.

1. He might restore — as from incipient decay and corruption.

2. He might authenticate — as between readings that were doubtful.

3. He might assemble — as from local dispersion of parts.

4. He might arrange — as from an uncertain and arbitrary succession.

All these services, we have little doubt, were, in fact, rendered by Pisistratus. The three first are already involved in the story of our foolish friend Diomedes. Pisistratus would do justice to the wise enact-

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ment of Solon, by which the *Iliad* was raised into a liturgy, periodically rehearsed by law at the greatest of the Athenian festivals: he would admire the regulation as to the prompter's (or state) copy. But this latter ordinance was rather the outline of a useful idea, than one which the first proposer could execute satisfactorily. Solon probably engrossed upon brazen tablets such a text as any one man could obtain. But it would be a work of time, of labor, of collation, and fine taste, to complete a sound edition. Even the work of Pisistratus was liable, as we know, to severe maltreatment by the Alexandrine critics. And by the way, those very Alexandrine revisals presuppose a received and orthodox text: for how could Zenodotus or Aristarchus breathe their mildewing breath upon the received readings, how could they pronounce *x* or *r*, for instance, spurious, unless by reference to some standard text in which *x* or *r* was adopted for legitimate? However, there is one single argument upon which the reader may safely allow himself to suspect the suspicions of Aristarchus, and to amend his emendations. It is this: Valkenaer points out to merited reprobation a correction applied by Aristarchus to the autobiographical sketch of himself, which Phœnix gives to Achilles in *Il.* X. Phœnix, in his old age, goes back to his youthful errors in a spirit of amiable candor. Out of affection to his mother, whose unmerited ill-treatment he witnessed with filial sympathy, he had offered at her request, an injury to his father for which he could obtain no forgiveness. Τῇ πιθόμην, says Phœnix: her I obeyed. Which passage one villain alters into Τῇ ὃ πιθόμην, her I did *not* obey: and thus the whole story is ruined. But Aristarchus goes further: he cancels and stilettoes

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the whole passage. Why then? Upon what conceivable objection? Simply, in both cases, upon the ridiculous allegation — that this confession, so frank, and even pathetic, was immoral; and might put bad thoughts into the minds of 'our young men.' Oh, you two old vagabonds! And thus, it seems, we have had a Bowdler's *Iliad*, long before our own Bowdler's Shakspeare. It is fit, however, that this anecdote should be known, as it shows the sort of principles that governed the revisal of Aristarchus. An editor, who could castrate a text upon any plea of disliking the sentiment, is not trustworthy. And for our parts, we should far prefer the authorized edition of Pisistratus to all the remodelled copies that were issued from the Alexandrine library.

So far, with reference to the three superior functions of Pisistratus. As to the fourth, his labor of arrangement, there is an important explanation to be made. Had the question been simply this — given four-and-twenty cantos of the *Iliad*, to place them in the most natural order; the trouble would have been trivial for the arranger, and the range of objections narrower for us. Some books determine their own place in the series; and those which leave it doubtful are precisely the least important. But the case is supposed to have been very different. The existing distribution of the poem into twenty-four tolerably equal sections, designated by the twenty-four capitals of the Greek alphabet, is ascribed to Aristarchus. Though one incomparable donkey, a Greek scholiast, actually denies this upon the following ground: Do you know reader, (says he,) why Homer began the Iliad with the word *mẹnin*, (μηνιν)? Look this way and I will tell you: it is a great mystery. What does the little μ of the Greek

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alphabet signify numerically? Why, forty. Good: And what does the η mean? Why, eight. Now, put both together, you have a prophecy or a promise on the part of Homer, that he meant to write forty-eight books, which proves that the Iliad must have had originally twenty-four. Take twenty-four from forty-eight, and there remain just twenty-four books for the Odyssey. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

But what Aristarchus did was a trifle — interesting rather to the eye or the bookbinder than the understanding. There was an earlier and a former important arrangement, due probably to Pisistratus.

THE AOIDOI, RHAPSODOI, HOMERIDÆ.

The Germans are exceedingly offended, that any man in ancient days, should presume to call himself a *rhapsodos*, without sending down a sealed letter to posterity, stating all the reasons which had induced him to take so unaccountable a step. And the uproar is inconceivable which they have raised about the office or function indicated by the word, as well as about the word itself considered etymologically. We, for our part, honestly confess, that, instead of finding that perplexity in the *rhapsodos* which our German brothers find for us, we are chiefly perplexed in accounting for *their* perplexity. However, we had been seduced into writing a very long essay on the several classes named in our title, until we came to this discovery; that, however curious in itself, the whole inquiry *could* not be, and *was* not, by the Germans themselves, connected with any one point at issue about Homer or the *Iliad*. After all the fighting on the question, it remains past denial, that the one sole proposition by which the *rhap-*

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sodoi have been brought even into any semblance of connection with Homer, is the following: — Every narrative poem of any length, was called a *rhapsodia*; and hence it is, that the several subordinate narratives of the *Iliad*, such as that called the Ἀριζεια Ἀγαμεμνονος, the prowess of Agammemnon — the Ἀριζεια Αιαντος, the prowess of Ajax — Περιποταμιος μαχῆ, the battle by the river side — Ὁπλοποιία, the fabric of the arms — Νεων καταλογος, the muster of the ships — Δωλονεια, the adventure of Dolon — and many others, which are now united into a composite structure called the *Iliad* were always introduced by the chanter with a proemial address to some divinity. And the Hymns, which we have now under the name of Homer, are supposed to have been occasional preludes of that sort. But say the Germans, these prelusive hymns were often the composition confessedly of the chanters. Well, and what then? Why nothing, reader; simply nothing. Only we, out of our benignity and mere grace, not wishing to see brother *literati* exposing themselves in this way, without a rag of logic about them, are resolved to suppose them tending to this inference — that if these fellows forged a beginning, they might also have forged a middle and an end. Some such hypothetic application of the long feuds about the *rhapsodoi*, is the one sole discoverable bearing that even the microscope of criticism will ever detect upon the Homeric questions. But really for any useful purpose, as well might a man suggest, that by possibility a great poet arose in Greece 900 years B. C., that his name was *Nothos Kibdélos*; that he lived in a hole; and that he forged the *Iliad*. Well then, if he did, *Nothos* is Homer. And *that* is simply saying that

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Homer ought to be spelled by a different arrangement of letters. We see no possible value in such unmeaning conjectures. Dean Swift's objection to the *Iliad*, to the Greek language, and to all ancient history, being obviously a modern hoax, inasmuch as Andromache was evidently a corruption of Andrew Mackay, and Alexander the Great, only the war-cry of a schoolboy, ('All eggs under the grate.!') to hide their eggs on the approach of the schoolmaster, is worth a thousand such dull objections. The single fact which we know about these preludes is, that they were pure detached generalities, applicable to all cases indifferently; ἀπαδοντα, irrelevant as an old Greek author calls them; and, to prevent any misconstruction of his meaning, as if that musical metaphor were applied by him to the mere music of the chanter, he adds — και ουδεν προς το πραγμα δηλοι; and they foreshow nothing at all that relates to the subject. Now, from this little notice of their character, it is clear, that, like doxologies, or choral burdens or *refrains* to songs, they were not improvised; not *impromptus;* they were stereotyped forms, ready for all occasions. *A Jove principium*, says Horace: with this opening a man could never go wrong, let the coming narative point which way it would. And Pindar observes, that in fact all the Homeric *rhapsodoi did* draw their openings from Jove. Or by way of variety, the Muses would be a good inauguration, or Apollo; and, as some man rightly suggests, in a great city like Athens, or Ephesus, the local divinity. Having, therefore, this dispensation once and forever from caring for the subject of their chants, the chanters are very little likely to have forged anything, except a bank note. Far more probable it is, that

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their preludes were sold, like queen's heads, at so much a dozen, leaving time to the chanters for clarifying their voices with *summat* cool, and to the harpers for splicing their broken harp-strings.

But the Germans, who will not leave this bone after all its fruitless mumbling, want to pick a quarrel about the time when these *rhapsodoi* began to exist. What does *that* signify? We will quarrel with no man about the age of Sir Archy's great-grandmother;' and yet, on consideration, we *will*. If they will persist in making a row, we shall try to rap their knuckles. They say that their *rhapsodoi* were, comparatively with Homer, young people. We say that they were *not*. And now that our blood is up, we insist upon it — that they were as old as the hills; twice as old as Homer; three times as old, if it will vex them more. We cannot say that we know this 'of our own knowledge;' but we have better evidence *for* it than any which they can have *against* it. In a certain old scholiast on Aristophanes, there is a couplet quoted from Hesiod in the following terms: —

Ἐν Δήλῳ τοτε πρωτον ἐγω και Ὅμηρος ἀοιδοι,
Μελπομεν, ἐν νεαροις ὑμνοις ῥαψαντες ἀοιδην.

'Then first in Delos did I and Homer, two bards, perform as musical reciters, laying the *nexus* of our poetry in original hymns.' He means to tell you that they were none of your beggarly itinerant *rhapsodoi*, who hired the bellman to write a poetic address for them. They had higher pretensions; they killed their own mutton. And not only were the preluding hymns their own copyrights, (pirates and teggs be off!) but also they had a meaning. They were spe-

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cially connected with the *epos*, or narrative, that followed, and not (as usually) irrelevant; so that they formed the transitional passages which connected one *epos* with another. Plato again, who stood nearer to Homer than any one of us, by the little difference of two thousand, two hundred and sixty years, swears that he knows Homer to have been a *rhapsodos*.

But what does the word mean? We intend to write a German quarto upon this question. It will be adapted to the use of posterity. Meantime, for the present flighty generation, whose ear must be powerfully tweaked to make it listen through a single page, we shall say thus much. Strabo, in a passage which deserves closer attention than it has received, explains why it is that poetry in general was called ἀοιδὴ or song. This name having been established, then afterwards each special kind of poetry bore this appellation, viz., *aoidé*, or *odé*, or *odia*, as a common or generic element in its designation, whilst its differential element was prefixed. Thus goat-song, or *tragodia*, revel-song, or *komodia*, were designations (derived from their occasional origins) of tragedy and comedy, both being chanted. On the same principle, *rhapsodia* shows by its ending that it is poetry, some kind or other: but what kind? Why, that secret is confided to the keeping of *rhaps*. And what may *rhaps* mean? Oh, Sir, you are not to know all for nothing. Please to subscribe for a copy of our quarto. For the present, however, understand that *rhapto* means *to sew with a needle*, consequently to *connect*. But, say you, all poetry must have some connection internally at least. True, but this circumstance is more noticeable and emphatic with regard to long narrative

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poems. The more were the parts to be connected, the more was the connection: more also depended upon it; and it caught the attention more forcibly. An ode, a song, a hymn, might contain a single ebullition of feeling. The connection might lie in the very rapture and passion, without asking for any effort on the poet's part. But, in any *epos* or epic romance, the several adventures, and parts of adventures, had a connecting link running through them, such as bespoke design and effort in the composer, viz., the agency of a single hero, or of a predominant hero. And thus *rhapsodia*, or linked song, indicated by an inevitable accident of all narrations, that it was narrative poetry. And a *rhapsodos* was the personal correlate of such poetry; he was the man that chanted it.

Well, and what is there in all this to craze a man's brain, to make him smite his forehead in desperation, or to ball up his huge fist in defiance? Yet scarcely is one row over before another commences. Pindar, it seems, has noticed the *rhapsodoi;* and, as if it were not enough to fight furiously about the explanation of that word, a second course of fights is undertaken about Pindar's explanation of the explanation. The Pindaric passages are two; one in the 3d Isthmian, which we confess makes even ourselves (in Kentuck phrase) 'wolfy about the shoulders, *i. e.* prurient for fighting. Speaking of Homer, Pindar, says, that he established (*i. e.* raised into life and celebrity) all modes of excellence, κατα ῥαβδον. It is a poet's way of saying that Homer did this as a *rhapsodos*. *Rhabdos*, therefore, is used as the symbol of a *rhapsodos;* it is, or it may be conceived to

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be, his instrument for connecting the narrative poem which gives him his designation. But what instrument? Is it a large darning-needle for sewing the parts together? If so, Homer will want a thimble No, says one big solemn critic, *not* a needle: none but an ass would think of such a thing. Well, old fellow, what is it then? It is, says he, a cane — a wand — a rattan. And what is Homer to do with a cane? Why, understand, that when his singing robes were on, (for it is an undoubted fact, that the ancient *rhapsodos* not only chanted in full pontificals, but had two sets of robes, *crimson* when he chanted the *Iliad*, *violet-colored* when he chanted the *Odyssey*,) in that case the *rhapsodos* held his stick in his right hand. But what sort of a stick? *Stick* is a large genus, running up from switch to cudgel, from rod to bludgeon. And our own persuasion is — that this stick or pencil of wood had something to do with the roll of remembrances, (not perhaps written copies, but mechanical suggestions for recovering the main succession of paragraphs,) which the *rhapsodos* used as short-hand notes for aiding his performance. But this is a subject which we must not pursue.

The other passage of Pindar is in the second Nemean — *Ὁθεν περ καὶ Ὁμηρίδαι ῥαπτων ἐπεων τα πολλ' ἀοιδοι ἀρχονται.* Of a certain conquerer at the games, Pindar says — that he took his beginning, his *coup d'essai*, from that point, viz. Jove, whence the Homeridæ take theirs; alluding to the prelusive hymns. Now, what seems most remarkable to us in this passage is, the art with which Pindar identifies the three classes of — 1. *Homeridæ* — 2. *Aoidoi* — 3. *Rhapsodoi*. The words *ῥαπτων ἐπεων ἀοιδοι* are an ingenious way of ex-

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pressing that the *aoidoi* were the same as the *rhapsodoi*. Now, where Pindar saw no essential difference, except as a species differs from a genus, it is not likely that we of this day shall detect one. At all events, it is certain that no discussion connected with any one of these three classes has thrown any light upon the main question as to the integrity of the *Iliad*. The *aoidoi*, and perhaps the *rhapsodoi*, certainly existed in the days of Homer. The *Homeridæ* must have arisen after him: but when, or under what circumstances, no record remains to say. Only the place of the *Homeridæ* is known: it was Crete: and this seems to connect them personally with Homer. But all is too obscure to penetrate; and in fact has not been penetrated.

PART III.

VERDICT ON THE HOMERIC QUESTION.

We will now, reader, endeavor to give you the heads of a judgment, or verdict, on this great question, drawn up with extreme care by ourselves.

I. — Rightly was it said by Voss, that all arguments worth a straw in this matter must be derived from the internal structure of the Iliad. Let us, therefore, hold an inquest upon the very body of this memorable poem; and, first of all, let us consider its outside characteristics, its style, language, metrical structure.

One of the arguments on which the sceptics rely is this — a thousand years, say they, make a severe trial of a man's style. What is very good Greek at one end of that period will probably be unintelligible Greek at the other. And throughout this period it will have

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been the duty of the *rhapsodoi*, or public reciters, to court the public interest, to sustain it, to humor it, by adapting their own forms of delivery to the existing state of language. Well, what of that? Why this — that under so many repeated alterations, the Iliad, as we now have it, must resemble Sir Francis Drake's ship — repaired so often, that not a spar of the original vessel remained.

In answer to this, we demand — why a thousand years? Doubtless there was that space between Homer and the Christian era. But why particularly connect the Greek language with the Christian era? In this artifice, reader, though it sounds natural to bring forward our Christian era in a question that is partly chronological, already there is bad faith. The Greek language had nothing to do with the Christian era. Mark this, and note well — that already, in the era of Pericles, whose chronological locus is 444 years B. C., the Greek language had reached its consummation. And by that word we mean its state of rigid fixation. Will any man deny that the Greek of Thucydides, Sophocles, Euripides, who were in the fullest sense, contemporaries with Pericles, that the Greek of Plato or Xenophon, who were at least children of some growth before Pericles died, continued through all after ages (in the etymological sense of the word) *standard* Greek? That is, it was standing Greek; Greek which *stood* still, and never after varied; so that eighteen hundred and ninety years after, at the final capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans, it remained the true familiar Greek of educated people; as all educated people talked; and removed even from the vulgar Greek of the mob only

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as the written language of books always differs from the spoken dialect of the uneducated. The time, therefore, for which we have to account, is not a thousand years, but a little more than one-half of that space. The range, therefore, the compass of time within which Homer had to struggle with the agencies of change, was about five centuries and a half.

Now the tendency to change is different in different languages; both from internal causes, (mechanism, &c.) and from causes external to the language, laid in the varying velocities of social progress. Secondly, besides this varying liability to change, in one language as compared with another, there is also a varying rate of change in the same language compared with itself. Change in language is not, as in many natural products, continuous: it is not equable, but eminently by fits and starts. Probably one hundred and fifty years at stagnant periods of history do less to modify a language than forty years amidst great struggles of intellect. And one thing we must insist on, which is, that between Homer and Pisistratus, the changes in Grecian society, likely to affect the language, were not to be compared, for power, with those acting upon English society ever since the Reformation.

This being premised, we request attention to the following case. Precisely on this very summer day, so bright and brilliant, of 1841, are the five hundred years completed (less by forty-five years than the interspace between Homer and Pisistratus) since Chaucer was a stout boy, 'alive,' and, probably, 'kicking:' for he was fined, about 1341, for kicking a Franciscan friar in Fleet-street; though Ritson erroneously asserts

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that the story was a 'hum,' invented by Chatterton. Now, what is the charactor of Chaucer's diction? A great delusion exists on that point. Some ninety or one hundred words that are now obsolete, certainly not many more, vein the whole surface of Chaucer; and thus a *primâ facie* impression is conveyed that Chaucer is difficult to understand: whereas a very slight practice, familiarizes his language. The Canterbury Tales were not made public until 1380; but the composition was certainly proceeding between 1350 and 1380; and before 1360 some considerable parts were published. Here we have a space greater by thirty-five years, than that between Homer and Pisistratus. And observe — had Chaucer's Tales the benefit of an oral recitation, were they assisted to the understanding by the pauses in one place, the hurrying and crowding of important words at another, and by the proper distribution of emphasis everywhere, — (all which, though impracticable in regular singing, is well enough accomplished in a chant, or λογος μεμελισμενος,) there is no man, however unfamiliar with old English, but might be made to go along with the movement of his admirable tales, though he might still remain at a loss for the meaning of insulated words.

Not Chaucer himself, however, but that model of language which Chaucer ridicules and parodies, as becoming obsolete in his days, the rhyme of Sir Thopas, — a model which may be safely held to represent the language of the two centuries previous, — is the point of appeal. Sir Thopas is clearly a parody of the Metrical Romances. Some of those hitherto published by Ritson, &c., are not older than Chaucer; but some ascend much higher, and may be referred to 1200, or

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perhaps earlier. Date them from 1240, and *that* places a period of six centuries complete between ourselves and them. Notwithstanding which, the greater part of the Metrical Romances, when aided by the connection of events narrated, or when impassioned, remain perfectly intelligible to this hour.

> 'What for labour, and what for faint,
> Sir Bevis was well nigh attaint.'

This is a couplet from Bevis, of Southampton; and another we will quote from the romance of Sir Gawaine and Sir Ywaine. In a vast forest, Sir G., by striking a shield suspended to a tree, had caused a dreadful storm to succeed; which, subsiding, is followed by a gloomy apparition of a mailed knight, who claims the forest for his own, taxes Sir Gawaine with having intruded on his domain, and concludes a tissue of complaints with saying that he had

> 'With weathers waken'd him of rest,
> And done him wrong in his forest.'

Now these two casual recollections well and fairly represent the general current of the language; not certainly what would now be written, but what is perfectly luminous from the context. At present, for instance, *faint* is an adjective; but the context and the corresponding word *labour*, easily teach the reader that it here means *faintness*. So, again, 'weather' is not now used for storms; but it is so used by a writer as late as Lord Bacon, and yet survives in such words as 'weather-beaten,' 'weather-stained.'

Now, we say that the interval of time between these romances and ourselves, is greater than between Homer and the age of Pericles. We say, also, that the

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constant succession of metrical writers connecting the time of Homer with that of Pericles, such as the authors of the 'Nostoi,' (or Memorable Returns homeward from Troy,) of the 'Cypria,' of the many Cyclical poems, next of the Lyric poets, a list closing with Pindar, in immediate succession to whom, and through most of his life strictly a contemporary with Pindar, comes Æschylus, close upon whose heels follow the whole cluster of dramatic poets, who glorified the life of Pericles — this apparently *continuous* series of verse writers, without the interposition of a single prose writer, would inevitably have the effect of keeping alive the poetic forms and choice of words, in a degree not so reasonably to be expected, under any interrupted succession. Our Chaucer died an old man, above seventy, in the year 1400; that is, in the concluding year of the fourteenth century. The next century, that is, the fifteenth, was occupied in much of its latter half by the civil wars of the two Roses, which threw back the development of the English literature, and tended to disturb the fluent transmission of Chaucer's and Gower's diction. The tumultuous century which came next, viz. the sixteenth, the former half of which was filled with the Reformation, caused a prodigious fermentation and expansion of the English intellect. But such convulsions are very unfavorable to the steady conservation of language, and of everything else depending upon usage. Now, in Grecian history, there are no corresponding agitations of society; the currents of tradition seem to flow downwards, without meeting anything to ripple their surface. It is true that the great Persian war *did* agitate Greece profoundly, and, by combining the Greeks from every

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quarter in large masses, this memorable war must have given a powerful shock to the stagnant ideas inherited from antiquity. But, as this respects Homer, observe how thoroughly its operation is defeated: for the outrageous conflagration of Sardis occurred about 500 B. C.; and the final events of the war, Salamis, Platæa, &c. occurred in 480 B. C. But already, by Pisistratus, whose *locus* is fifty years before the affair of Sardis, Homer had been revised and settled, and (as one might express it) stereotyped. Consequently, the chief political revolution affecting Greece collectively, if you except the Dorian migrations, &c., between Homer and Pericles, was intercepted from all possibility of affecting the Homeric diction, &c., by the seasonable authentication of the entire Homeric text under the seal and *imprimatur* of Pisistratus. Here is the old *physical* guarantee urged by Æsop's lamb *versus* wolf, that Homer's text could not have been reached by any influence, direct or oblique, from the greatest of the post-Homeric convulsions. It would be the old miracle of the Greek proverb (*Ἀνω ποταμων*, &c.) which adopted the reflux of rivers towards their fountains as the liveliest type of the impossible.

There is also a philosophic reason, why the range of diction in Chaucer should be much wider, and liable to greater changes, than that of Homer. Revise those parts of Chaucer which at this day are most obscure, and it will uniformly be found that they are the *subjective* sections of his poetry; those, for instance, in which he is elaborately decomposing a character. A character is a subtle fugacious essence which does, or does not, exist, according to the capacity of the eye which is applied to it. In Homer's age, no such

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meditative differences were perceived. All is *objective* in the descriptions, and external. And in those cases where the mind or its affections must be noticed, always it is by the broad distinctions of anger, fear, love, hatred, without any vestige of a sense for the more delicate interblendings or *nuances* of such qualities. But a language built upon these elementary distinctions is necessarily more durable than another, which, applying itself to the subtler phenomena of human nature, exactly in that proportion applies itself to what is capable of being variously viewed, or viewed in various combinations, as society shifts its aspects.

The result from all this is, that, throughout the four hundred and forty-five years from Homer to Pisistratus, the diction even of real life would not have suffered so much alteration, as in modern times it would be likely to do within some single centuries. But with respect to poetry, the result is stronger.

The diction of poetry is everywhere a privileged diction. The antique or scriptural language is everywhere affected in serious or impassioned poetry. So that no call would arise from modern adaptations, until the language had grown unintelligible. Nor would *that* avail to raise such a call. The separate non-intelligibility of a word would cause no difficulty, whilst it would give the grace of antique coloring. For a word which is separately obscure is not so *in nexu*. Suppose, reader, we were to ask you the meaning of the English word *chode*, you might be a little puzzled. Yet it is an honest and once an industrious word, though now retired from business; and it stands in our authorized translation of the Bible:

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where, if you had chanced to meet it *in loco*, you would easily have collected from the context that it was the past tense of *chide*. Again, what Southern reader of Sir Walter Scott ever failed to gather the full sense of the Scottish dialect? or what Scotchman to gather the sense of the Irish dialect so plentifully strewed in modern tales? or what landsman to gather the sense of the marine dialect in our nautical novels? In all such cases, the passion, the animation and movement of the feeling, very often the logic, as they arise from the context, carry you fluently along with the meaning.

Equating, therefore, the sleeping state of early Greece with the stirring progress of modern Christian lands, we come to this conclusion, that Homer, the genuine unaltered Homer, would not, by all likelihood, be more archaic in his coloring of style than the *Froissart* of Lord Berners is to ourselves. That is, we equate four hundred and forty-five early Greek years with the last three hundred and twenty English years. But we will concede something more. The common English translation of the long prose romance, called *Mort d'Arthur*, was composed, we believe, about the year 1480. This will therefore be three hundred and sixty years old. Now, both Lord Berners and the *Mort d'Arthur*, are as intelligible as this morning's newspaper in June, 1841. And one proof that they are so is, that both works have been reprinted *verbatim et literatim* in this generation for popular use. Something venerable and solemn there is in both these works, as again in the *Paston Letters*, which are hard upon four hundred years old, but no shadow of difficulty.

B. *Homer's Lexis.* — Now, reader, having stated,

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by practical examples, what effect was to have been anticipated from age, let us next inquire what effect has taken place. Observe the monstrous dishonesty of these German critics. What if a man should argue thus: 'This helmet never can have descended from Mambrino; for, if it had, there would have been weather-stains, cracks, dints of swords,' &c. To which it is replied: — 'Doubtless; but have you looked to see if there are *not* such marks of antiquity?' Would you not think the disparager of the helmet worthy of the treadmill, if it should turn out that he had never troubled himself to examine it? These Germans argue *à priori*, that, upon certain natural causes, there would arise a temptation to the Homeric chanters for adapting the diction to their audience. Conditionally we grant this — that is, if a deep night of darkness fell suddenly upon the language. But our answer is, that this condition never would be realized; and that a solemnizing twilight is the very utmost which could ever steal over Homer's diction. Meantime, where is the sense of calculating *à priori* what would be *likely* to happen, when by simply opening a book, we can see what *has* happened? These Germans talk as if the Homer we have now, spoke exactly such Greek as Euripides and Sophocles. Or, if some slight differences are admitted, as though these were really too inconsiderable to meet the known operation of chance and change through four and a half centuries. To hear *them*, you must suppose that Homer differed little more from the golden writers of Greece than as Pope's diction differs from that of 1841. Who now says, *writ* for *wrote* and for *written*? Who says *'tis* and *'twas* since

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Queen Anne's reign? There are not twelve consecutive lines in Pope, Swift, Addison, which will not be found marked by such slight peculiarities of their age. Yet their general agreement with ourselves is so striking, that the difficulty is to detect the differences. Now, if Homer were in that condition relating to the age of Pericles — were it even that he exhibited no more sombre hues than those which Æschylus exhibits, as compared with his younger brothers of the drama, we should grant at once that a case is made out, calling for some explanation. There has been a change. There is something to account for. Somebody has been 'doctoring' this man, would be the inference. But how stands the truth? Why, reader, the Homeric *lexis* is so thoroughly peculiar and individual, that it requires a separate lexicon; and if all men do not use a separate lexicon, it is only because that particular vocabulary has been digested into the series of general vocabularies. Pierce Plowman is not half so unlike in diction to Sir Walter Scott as is Homer to Euripides. And, instead of simply accounting for the time elapsed, and fairly answering to the reasonable attrition of that time, the Homeric diction is sufficient to account for three such spaces. What would the infidels have? Homer, they say, is an old — old — very old man, whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door; and, therefore — what? Why, he ought to look very old indeed. Well, good men, he *does* look very old indeed. He ought, they say, to be covered with lichens and ivy. Well, he *is* covered with lichens and ivy. And sure we are, that few people will undertake to know how a man looks, when he is five hundred years old, by comparison with himself at four

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hundred. Suffice it here to say, for the benefit of the unlearned, that not one of our own earliest writers, hardly Thomas of Ercildoune, has more of peculiar antique words in his vocabulary than Homer.

C. *Homer's Metre.* — In this case, the Germans themselves admit the extraordinary character of the Homeric *rhythmus*. 'How free, how spirited in its motion!' they all exclaim; 'how characteristically his own!' Well, now, did the father of sophisms ever hear of such stuff as this, when you connect it with what these Germans say elsewhere? As well might a woman say, that you had broken her china cups, but that you had artfully contrived to preserve the original Chinese designs. How could you preserve the form or surface if you destroy the substance? And, if these imaginary adapters of Homer modernized his whole diction, how could they preserve his metrical effects? With the peculiar word or idiom would vanish the peculiar prosody. Even a single word is not easily replaced by another having the same sense, the same number of syllables, and in each syllable the same metrical quantity; but how immeasurably more difficult is this, when the requisition is for a whole sentence or clause having the same sense in the same number of syllables and the same prosody? Why, a man would not doctor three lines in a century under such intolerable conditions. And, at the end of his labor, like Addison's small poet, who worked for years upon the name of 'Mary Bohun,' in order to bind its stubborn letters within the hoop-ring of an anagram, he would probably fail, and go mad into the bargain. If the metre is characteristically Homeric, as say these infidels, then is the present text, (so inextricably co-

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adunated with the metre,) upon their own showing, the good old Homeric text — and no mistake.

But, reader, the Homeric metre is not truly described by these men. It is certainly *henspeck*, to use a good old English word — that is to say, recognizable; you challenge it for Homer's whenever you meet it. Characteristic it is, but not exactly for the reason they assign. The fact is, though flowing and lively, it betrays the immaturity of the metrical art. Those constraints, from which the Germans praise its freedom, are the constraints of exquisite art. This is a difficult subject; for, in our own literature, the true science of metrical effects has not belonged to our later poets, but to the elder. Spenser, Shakspeare, Milton, are the great masters of exquisite versification. And Waller, who was idly reputed to have refined our metre, was a mere trickster, having a single tune moving in his imagination, without compass and without variety. Chaucer, also, whom Dryden in this point so thoroughly misunderstood, was undoubtedly a most elaborate master of metre, as will appear when we have a *really* good edition of him. But in the Pagan literature this was otherwise. We see in the Roman poets that, precisely as they were antique, they were careless, or at least very inartificial in the management of their metre. Thus Lucilius, Ennius, even Lucretius, leave a class of faults in their verse, from which Virgil would have revolted. And the very same class of faults is found in Homer. But though faults as regards severe art, they are in the very spirit of *naïveté* or picturesque naturalness, and wear the stamp of a primitive age — artless and inexperienced.

This article would require a volume. But we will

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content ourselves with one illustration. Every scholar is aware of the miserable effect produced where there is no *cæsura*, in that sense of the word *cæsura* which means the interlocking of the several feet into the several words. Thus, imagine a line like this: —

'Urbem Romam primo condit Romulus auro.'

Here, the six feet of the hexameter are separately made out by six several words. Each word is a foot; and no foot interlocks into another. So that there is no *cæsura*. Yet even *that* is not the worst fault of the line. The other and more destructive is — the coincidence of the *ictus*, or emphasis, with the first syllable of every foot.

Now in Homer we see both faults repeatedly. Thus, to express the thundering pace with which a heavy stone comes trundling back from an eminence, he says: —

'Autis epeita pedónde kulindeto laãs anaides.'

Here there is the shocking fault, to any metrical ear, of making the emphasis fall regularly on the first syllable, which in effect obliterates all the benefit of the cæsura.

Now, Virgil has not one such line in all his works, nor could have endured such a line. In that verse expressing the gallop or the caracoling of a horse, he also has five dactyles —

'Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.'

But he takes care to distribute the accents properly, on which so much even of the ancient versification depended: except in the two last feet, the emphasis of Virgil's line never coincides with the first syllable of the foot. Homer, it will be said, wished to express

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mimetically the rolling, thundering, leaping motion of the stone. True, but so did Virgil wish to express the thundering gallop of the horse, in which the beats of the hoofs return with regular intervals. Each sought for a picturesque effect — each adopted a dactylic structure: but to any man who has studied this subject, we need not say, that picturesqueness, like any other effect, must be subordinated to a higher law of beauty. Whence, indeed, it is that the very limits of imitation arise for every art, sculpture, painting, &c., indicating what it ought to imitate, and what it ought not to imitate. And unless regard is had to such higher restraints, metrical effects become as silly and childish as the musical effects in Kotzwarra's *Battle of Prague*, with its ridiculous attempts to mimic the firing of cannon, groans of the wounded, &c., instead of involving the passion of a battle in the agitation of the music.

These rudenesses of art, however, are generally found in its early stages. And we are satisfied that, as art advanced, these defects must have been felt for such; so that, had any license of improvement existed, they would have been removed. That they were left untouched in the ages of the great lyrical masters, when metre was so scientifically understood, is a strong argument that Homer was sacred from all tampering. Over the whole field of the Homeric versification, both for its quality of faults and its quality of merits, lies diffused this capital truth — that no opening existed for the correction, in any age after the perception of a fault (that is, when the temptation to correct) could first have arisen.

D. *The Homeric Formulæ.* — Here is another countersign for the validity of our present Homeric text.

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In our own metrical romances, or wherever a poem is meant not for readers but for chanters and oral reciters, these *formulæ*, to meet the same recurring cases, exist by scores. Thus every woman who happens to be young, is described as 'so bright of blé,' or complexion: always a man goes 'the mountenance of a mile,' before he overtakes or is overtaken. And so on through a vast bead-roll of cases. In the same spirit Homer has his eternal *τον δ' αὖ ὑπόδρα ἰδων*, or *επεα πτερόεντα προσηυδα*, or *τον δ' απαμειβόμενος προσεφη*, &c.

Now these again, under any refining spirit of criticism, at liberty to act freely, are characteristics that would have disappeared. Not that they are faults: on the contrary, to a reader of sensibility, such recurrences wear an aspect of childlike simplicity, beautifully recalling the features of Homer's primitive age. But they would have appeared faults to all commonplace critics in literary ages.

We say, therefore, that first, the Diction of the *Iliad*, (B;) secondly, the Metre of the *Iliad*, (C;) thirdly, the Formulæ and recurring Clauses of the *Iliad*, (D;) — all present us with so many separate attestations to the purity of the Homeric text from any considerable interference. For every one of these would have given way to the 'Adapters,' had any such people operated upon Homer.

II. — The first class of arguments, therefore, for the sanity of the existing Homer, is derived from language. Our second argument we derive from THE IDEALITY OF ACHILLES. This we owe to a suggestion of Mr. Wordsworth's. Once, when we observed to him, that of imagination, in his own sense, we saw no instance

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in the *Iliad*, he replied — 'Yes: there is the character of Achilles; this is imaginative, in the same sense as Ariosto's Angelica.' *Character* is not properly the word: nor was it what Mr. Wordsworth meant. It is an idealized conception. The excessive beauty of Angelica, for instance, robs the Paladins of their wits; draws anchorites into guilt; tempts the baptized into mortal feud; summons the unbaptized to war; brings nations together from the ends of the earth. And so, with different but analogous effects, the very perfection of courage, beauty, strength, speed, skill of eye, of voice, and all personal accomplishments, are embodied in the son of Peleus. He has the same supremacy in modes of courtesy, and doubtless, according to the poet's conception, in virtue. In fact, the astonishing blunder which Horace made in deciphering his Homeric portrait, gives the best memorandum for recalling the real points of his most self-commanding character: —

> 'Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
> Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat armis.'

Was that man *iracundus*, who, in the very opening of the *Iliad*, makes his anger bend under the most brutal insult to the public welfare? When two people quarrel, it is too commonly the unfair award of careless bystanders, that 'one is as bad as the other;' whilst generally it happens that one of the parties is but the respondent in a quarrel originated by the other. Homer says of the two chiefs, διαστητην ερισαντε, they stood aloof in feud; but what was the nature of the feud? Agamemnon had inflicted upon Achilles, himself a king and the most brilliant chieftain of the

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confederate army, the very foulest outrage (matter and manner) that can be imagined. Because his own brutality to a priest of Apollo had caused a pestilence, and he finds that he must resign this priest's daughter, he declares that he will indemnify himself by seizing a female captive from the tents of Achilles. Why of Achilles more than of any other man? Color of right, or any relation between his loss and his redress, this brutal Agamemnon does not offer by pretence. But he actually executes his threat. Nor does he *ever* atone for it. Since his returning Briseis, without disavowing his right to have seized her, is wide of the whole point at issue. Now, under what show of common sense can that man be called *iracundus*, who calmly submits to such an indignity as this? Or, is that man *inexorabilis*, who sacrifices to the tears and gray hairs of Priam, his own meditated revenge, giving back the body of the enemy who had robbed him of his dearest friend? Or is there any gleam of truth in saying that *jura negat sibi nata*, when of all the heroes in the *Iliad*, he is the most punctiliously courteous, the most ceremonious in his religious observances, and the one who most cultivated the arts of peace? Or is that man the violent defier of all law and religion, who submits with so pathetic a resignation to the doom of early death?

> 'Enough, I know my fate — to die; to see no more
> My much-loved parents, or my native shore.'

Charles XII. of Sweden threatened to tickle that man who had libelled his hero Alexander. But Alexander himself would have tickled master Horace for this gross libel on Achilles, if they had happened to be contemporaries.

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The character, in short, of the matchless Pelides, has an ideal finish and a divinity about it, which argue, that it never could have been a fiction or a gradual accumulation from successive touches. It was raised by a single flash of creative imagination; it was a reality seen through the harmonizing abstractions of two centuries; and it is in itself a great unity, which penetrates every section where it comes forward, with an identification of these several parts as the work of one man.

III. — Another powerful guarantee of the absolute integrity which belongs to the *Iliad*, lies in the Ionic forms of language, combined everywhere (as Plato remarks) with Ionic forms of life. Homer had seen the modes of Dorian life, as in many cities of Crete. But his heart turned habitually to the Ionian life of his infancy. Here the man who builds on pretences of recasting, &c., will find himself in this dilemma. If, in order to account for the poem still retaining its Ionic dress, which must have been affected by any serious attempts at modernizing it, he should argue that the Ionic dialect, though not used on the continent, continued to be perfectly intelligible; then, our good Sir, what call for recasting it? Nobody supposes that an antique form of language would be objectionable *per se*, or that it would be other than solemn and religious in its effect, so long as it continued to be intelligible. On the other hand, if he argues that it must gradually have grown unintelligible or less intelligible, (for that the Ionic of Herodotus, in the age of Pericles, was very different from the Homeric,) in that case, to *whom* would it be unintel-

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ligible? Why, to the Athenians, for example, or to some people of continental Greece. But on that supposition, it would have been exchanged for some form of Attic or other continental Greek — to be Ionian by descent, did not imply the use of a dialect formed in Asia Minor. And not only would heterogeneous forms of language have thus crept into the *Iliad*, but inevitably in making these changes, other heterogeneities in the substance would have crept in concurrently. That purity and sincerity of Ionic life, which arrested the eye of Plato, would have melted away under such modern adulterations.

IV. — But another argument, against the possibility of such recasts, is founded upon a known remarkable fact. It is a fact of history, coming down to us from several quarters, that the people of Athens were exceedingly discontented with the slight notice taken of themselves in the *Iliad*. Now observe, already this slight notice is in itself one argument of Homer's antiquity; and the Athenians did wrong to murmur at so many petty towns of the Peloponnesus being glorified, while in *their* case Homer only gives one line or so to Menestheus their chief. Let them be thankful for getting anything. Homer knew what Athens was in those days much better than any of us; and surely Glasgow or Liverpool could not complain of being left out of the play, in a poem on the Crusades. But there was another case that annoyed the Athenians equally. Theseus, it is well known, was a great scamp; in fact, a very bad fellow indeed. You need go no further than Ariadne, (who, by most tradition, hanged herself in her garters, at Naxos,) to

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prove *that*. Now, Homer, who was determined to tell no lies in the matter, roundly blurts out the motive for his base desertion of Ariadne, which had the double guilt of cruelty and of ingratitude, as in Jason's conduct towards Medea. It was, says the honest bard, because he was desperately in love with Ægle. This line in Homer, was like a coroner's verdict on Ariadne — *died by the villany of Theseus*. It was impossible to hide this conduct in their national hero, if it were suffered to stand. An attempt was, therefore, made to eject it. Pisistratus is charged, in this one instance, with having smuggled in a single forged line. But, even in his own lifetime, it was dismally suspected; and, when Pisistratus saw men looking askance at it, he would say — 'Well, Sir, what's in the wind now? What are you squinting at?' Upon which the man would answer — 'Oh, nothing, Sir, I was only looking at things in general.' But Pisistratus knew better — it was no go — *that* he saw — and the line is obelized to this day. Now, where Athens failed, is it conceivable that anybody else would succeed?

V. — A fifth argument, upon which we rely much, is the CIRCUMSTANTIALITY of the *Iliad*. Let the reader pause to consider what *that* means in this particular case. The invention of little personal circumstances and details, is now a well-known artifice of novelists. We see even in our oldest metrical romances, a tendency to this mode of giving a lively expression to the characters, as well as of giving a colorable reality to the tale. Yet, even with us, it is an art that has never but once been successfully

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applied to regular history. De Foe is the only author known, who has so plausibly circumstantiated his false historical records, as to make them pass for genuine, even with literary men and critics. In his *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, he assumes the character of a soldier who had fought under Gustavus Adolphus, (1628–31,) and afterwards (1642–45) in our own parliamentary war; in fact, he corresponds chronologically to Captain Dalgetty. In other works he personates a sea captain, a hosier, a runaway apprentice, an officer under Lord Peterborough in his Catalonian expedition. In this last character, he imposed upon Dr. Johnson, and by men better read in history he has actually been quoted as a regular historical authority. How did he accomplish so difficult an end? Simply by inventing such little circumstantiations of any character or incident, as seem by their apparent inertness of effect, to verify themselves; for, where the reader is told that such a person was the posthumous son of a tanner; that his mother married afterwards a Presbyterian schoolmaster, who gave him a smattering of Latin; but, the schoolmaster dying of the plague, that he was compelled at sixteen to enlist for bread; in all this, as there is nothing at all amusing, we conclude, that the author could have no reason to detain us with such particulars, but simply because they were true. To invent, when nothing at all is gained by inventing, there seems no imaginable temptation. It never occurs to us, that this very construction of the case, this very inference from such neutral details, was precisely the object which De Foe had in view, and by which he meant to profit. He thus gains the opportunity of impressing upon his tales a

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double character; he makes them so amusing, that girls read them for novels; and he gives them such an air of verisimilitude, that men read them for histories.

Now this is one amongst the many acts by which, in comparison of the ancients, we have so prodigiously extended the compass of literature. In Grecian, or even in Roman literature, no dream ever arose of interweaving a fictitious interest with a true one. Nor was the possibility then recognized of any interest founded in fiction, even though kept apart from historic records. Look at Statius; look at Virgil; look at Valerius Flaccus; or look at the entire Greek drama; not one incident beyond the mere descriptive circumstances of a battle, or a storm, or a funeral solemnity, with the ordinary turns of skill or chance in the games which succeed, can be looked upon as matter of invention. All rested upon actual tradition: — in the *Æneid*, for instance, upon ancient Italian traditions still lingering amongst the people; in the *Thebaid*, where the antiquity of the story is too great to allow of this explanation, doubtless they were found in Grecian poems. Four centuries after the Christian era, if the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter is excepted, and a few sketches of Lucian, we find the first feeble tentative development of the romance interest. The *Cyropædia* was simply one-sided in its information. But, in the *Iliad*, we meet with many of these little individual circumstances, which can be explained (consistently with the remark here made) upon no principle whatever except that of downright, notorious truth. Homer could not have wandered so far astray from the universal sympathies of his country, as ever to think

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of fictions so useless; and if he had, he would soon have been recalled to the truth by disagreeable experiences; for the construction would have been — that he was a person very ill-informed, and not trustworthy through ignorance.

Thus, in speaking of Polydamas, Homer says (*Iliad* XVIII. 250) that he and Hector were old cronies; which might strike the reader as odd, since Polydamas was no fighting man at all, but cultivated the arts of peace. Partly, therefore, by way of explaining their connection — partly for the simple reason that doubtless, it was a fact, Homer adds that they were born in the same night; a circumstance which is known to have had considerable weight upon early friendships in the houses of Oriental princes.

> Ἕκτορι δ' ἦεν ἑταῖρος, ἠῆ δ' ἐν νυκτὶ γένοντο.
> 'To Hector now he was a bosom friend,
> For in one night they were born.'

Now, we argue, that had Homer not lived within a reasonable number of generations after Troy, he never would have learned a little fact of this kind. He must have heard it from his nurse, good old creature, who had heard her grandfather talk with emotion of Troy and its glorious palaces, and of the noble line of princes that perished in her final catastrophe. A ray of that great sunset had still lingered in the old man's youth; and the deep impression of so memorable a tragedy had carried into popular remembrance vast numbers of specialities and circumstantialities, such as might be picked out of the *Iliad*, that could have no attraction for the mind, but simply under the one condition that they were true. An interval as great as

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four centuries, when all relation between the house of Priam and the surrounding population would have been obliterated, must have caused such petty anecdotes to lose their entire interest, and, in that case, they would never have reached Homer. Here, therefore, is a collateral indication that Homer lived probably within two centuries of Troy. On the other hand, if the *Iliad* had ever become so obsolete in its diction that popular feeling called for a *diaskeué*, or thorough recast, in that case, we argue that all such trivial circumstances (interesting only to those who knew them for facts) would have dropped out of the composition.

VI. — That argument is of a nature to yield us an extensive field, if we had space to pursue it. The following, which we offer as our argument, is negative: it lies in the absence of all anachronisms, which would most certainly have arisen in any modern remodelling, and which do in fact disfigure all the Greek forgeries of letters, &c. in Alexandrian ages. How inevitable, amongst a people so thoroughly uncritical as the Greeks, would have been the introduction of anachronisms by wholesale, had a more modern hand been allowed to tamper with the texture of the poem! But, on the contrary, all inventions, rights, usages, known to have been of later origin than the Homeric ages, are absent from the *Iliad*. For instance, in any recast subsequent to the era of 700 B. C., how natural it would have been to introduce the trumpet! And cavalry again, how excellent a resource for varying and inspiriting the battles: whereas Homer introduces horses only as attached to the chariots; and the chariots as used only by a few leading heroes, whose

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heavy mail made it impossible for *them* to go on foot, as the mass of the army did. Why, then, did Homer himself forbear to introduce cavalry? Was he blind to the variety he would have gained for his descriptive scenes? No; but simply upon the principle, so absolute for him of adhering to the facts. But what caused the fact? Why was there no cavalry? Evidently from the enormous difficulty of carrying any number of horses by sea, under the universal non-adaptation to such a purpose of the Greek shipping. The 'horse-marines' had not begun to show out; and a proper 'troop-ship' must have been as little known to Agamemnon, as the right kind of Havana cigars or as duelling pistols to Menelaus.

VII. — A seventh argument for the integrity of our present *Iliad* in its main section, lies in the *nexus* of its subordinate parts. Every canto in this main section implies every other. Thus the funeral of Hector implies that his body had been ransomed. That fact implies the whole journey of Priam to the tents of Achilles. This implies the death and last combat of Hector. But how should Hector and Achilles have met in battle, after the wrathful vow of Achilles? That argues the death of Patroclus as furnishing the sufficient motive. But the death of Patroclus argues the death of Sarpedon, the Trojan ally, which it was that roused the vindictive fury of Hector. These events in their turn argue the previous success of the Trojans, which had moved Patroclus to interfere. And this success of the Trojans argues the absence of Achilles, which again argues the feud with Agamemnon. The whole of this story unfolds like a process of

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vegetation. And the close intertexture of the several parts is as strong a proof of unity in the design and execution, as the intense life and consistency in the conception of Achilles.

VIII. — By an eighth argument, we reply to the objection sometimes made to the transmission of the *Iliad*, through the *rhapsodoi*, from the burden which so long a poem would have imposed upon the memory. Some years ago was published, in this journal,* a paper on the Flight of the Kalmuck Tartars from Russia. Bergmann, the German from whom that account was chiefly drawn, resided for a long time amongst the Kalmucks, and had frequent opportunities of hearing musical recitations from the *Dschangæriade*. This is the great Tartar epic; and it extends to three hundred and sixty cantos, each averaging the length of an Homeric book. Now, it was an ordinary effort for a minstrel to master a score of these cantos, which amounts pretty nearly to the length of the *Iliad*. But a case more entirely in point is found in a minor work of Xenophon's. A young man is there introduced as boasting that he could repeat by heart the whole of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* — a feat, by the way, which has been more than once accomplished by English schoolboys. But the answer made to this young man is, that there is nothing at all extraordinary in that; for that every common *rhapsodos* could do as much. To us, indeed, the whole objection seems idle. The human memory is capable of far greater efforts; and the music would prodigiously lighten the effort. But, as it is an

* Blackwood's Magazine

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objection often started, we may consider it fortunate that we have such a passage as this in Xenophon, which not only illustrates the kind of qualification looked for in a *rhapsodos*, but shows also that such a class of people continue to practise in the generation subsequent to that of Pericles.

Upon these eight arguments we build. This is our case. They are amply sufficient for the purpose. Homer is not a person known to us separately and previously, concerning whom we are inquiring whether, in addition to what else we know of him, he did not also write the *Iliad*. 'Homer' means nothing else but the man who wrote the *Iliad*. Somebody, you will say, must have written it. True; but, if that somebody should appear by any probable argument, to have been a multitude of persons, there goes to wreck the unity which is essential to the idea of a Homer. Now, this unity is sufficiently secured, if it should appear that a considerable section of the *Iliad* — and that section by far the most full of motion, of human interest, of tragical catastrophe, and through which runs as the connecting principle, a character the most brilliant, magnanimous, and noble, that Pagan morality could conceive — was, and must have been, the work and conception of a single mind. Achilles revolves through that section of the *Iliad* in a series of phases, each of which looks forward and backward to all the rest. He travels like the sun through his diurnal course. We see him first of all rising upon us as a princely councillor for the welfare of the Grecian host. We see him atrociously insulted in this office; yet still, though a king and unused to opposition, and boil-

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ing with youthful blood, nevertheless commanding his passion, and retiring in clouded majesty. Even thus, though having now so excellent a plea for leaving the army, and though aware of the early death that awaited him if he stayed, he disdains to profit by the evasion. We see him still living in the tented field, and generously unable to desert those who had so insultingly deserted *him*. We see him in a dignified retirement, fulfilling all the duties of religion, friendship, hospitality; and, like an accomplished man of taste, cultivating the arts of peace. We see him so far surrendering his wrath to the earnest persuasion of friendship, that he comes forth at a critical moment for the Greeks to save them from ruin. What are his arms? He has none at all. Simply by his voice he changes the face of the battle. He shouts, and nations fly from the sound. Never but once again is such a shout recorded by a poet —

> 'He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
> Of hell resounded.

Who called? *That* shout was the shout of an archangel. Next we see him reluctantly allowing his dearest friend to assume his own arms; the kindness and the modesty of his nature forbidding him to suggest, that not the divine weapons but the immortal arm of the wielder had made them invincible. His friend perishes. Then we see him rise in his noontide wrath, before which no life could stand. The frenzy of his grief makes him for a time cruel and implacable. He sweeps the field of battle like a monsoon. His revenge descends perfect, sudden, like a curse from heaven. We now recognize the goddess-born. This is his avatar. Had he moved to battle under the ordinary motives of Ajax, Diomed,

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and the other heroes, we never could have sympathized or gone along with so withering a course. We should have viewed him as a 'scourge of God,' or fiend, born for the tears of women and the maledictions of mothers. But the poet, before he would let him loose upon men, creates for him a sufficient, or at least palliating motive. In the sternest of his acts, we read only the anguish of his grief. This is, surely the perfection of art. At length the work of destruction is finished; but, if the poet leaves him at this point, there would be a want of repose, and we should be left with a painful impression of his hero as forgetting the earlier humanities of his nature, and brought forward only for final exhibition in his terrific phases. Now, therefore, by machinery the most natural, we see this great hero travelling back within our gentler sympathies, and revolving to his rest like the sun disrobed of his blazing terrors. We see him settling down to that humane and princely character in which he had been first exhibited — we see him relenting at the sight of Priam's gray hairs, touched with the sense of human calamity, and once again mastering his passion — grief now, as formerly he had mastered his wrath. He consents that his feud shall sleep: he surrenders the corpse of his capital enemy; and the last solemn chords of the poem rise with a solemn intonation from the grave of 'Hector, the tamer of horses' — that noble soldier who had so long been the column of his country, and to whom, in his dying moments, the stern Achilles had declared — but then in the middle career of his grief — that no honorable burial should ever be granted.

Such is the outline of an Achilleis, as it might be gathered from the *Illiad:* and for the use of schools

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we are surprised that such a beautiful whole has not long since been extracted. A tale, more affecting by its story and vicissitudes does not exist; and, after this, who cares in what order the non-essential parts of the poem may be arranged, or whether Homer was their author? It is sufficient that one mind must have executed this Achilleis, in consequence of its intense unity. Every part implies every other part. With such a model before him as this poem on the wrath of Achilles, Aristotle could not carry his notions of unity too high. And the unifying mind which could conceive and execute this Achilleis — that is what we mean by Homer. As well might it be said, that the parabola described by a cannon-ball was in one-half due to a first discharge, and in the other half to a second, as that one poet could lay the preparations for the passion and sweep of such a poem, whilst another conducted it to a close. Creation does not proceed by instalments: the steps of its revolution are not successive, but simultaneous; and the last book of the Achilleis was undoubtedly conceived in the same moment as the first.

What effect such an Achilleis, abstracted from the *Iliad*, would probably leave upon the mind, it happens that we can measure by our own childish experience. In Russell's *Ancient Europe*, a book much used in the last century, there is an abstract of the *Iliad*, which presents very nearly the outline of an Achilleis, such as we have supposed. The heroes are made to speak in a sort of stilted, or at least buskined language, not unsuited to youthful taste: and from the close convergement of the separate parts, the interest is condensed. This book, in our eighth year, we read. It

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was our first introduction to the 'Tale of Troy divine;' and we do not deceive ourselves in saying, that this memorable experience drew from us the first unselfish tears that ever we shed; and by the stings of grief which it left behind, demonstrated its own natural pathos.

Whether the same mind conceived also the *Odyssey*, is a separate question. We are certainly inclined to believe, that the *Odyssey* belongs to a post-Homeric generation — to the generation of the *Nostoi*, or homeward voyages of the several Grecian chiefs. And with respect to all the burlesque or satiric poems ascribed to Homer, such as the *Batrachomyomachia*, the *Margites*, &c., the whole fiction seems to have arisen out of an uncritical blunder; they had been classed as Homeric poems — meaning by the word '*Homeric*,' simply that they had a relation or reference to Homer, which they certainly have. At least we may say this of the *Batrachomyomachia*, which still survives, that it undoubtedly points to the *Iliad* as a mock-heroic parody upon its majestic forms and diction. In that sense it is Homeric — *i. e.* it relates to Homer's poetry; it presupposes it as the basis of its own fun. But subsequent generations, careless and uncritical, understood the word Homeric to mean — actually composed by Homer. How impossible this was, the reader may easily imagine to himself by the parallel case of our own parodies on Scripture. What opening for a parody could have arisen in the same age as that Scriptural translation? 'Howbeit,' 'peradventure,' 'lifted up his voice and wept,' 'found favor in thy sight,' — phrases such as these have, to our modern feelings, a deep coloring of antiquity; placed, therefore, in juxtaposition with modern words or modern

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ideas, they produce a sense of contrast which is strongly connected with the ludicrous. But nothing of this result could possibly exist for those who first used these phrases in translation. The words were such as, in their own age, ranked as classical and proper. These were no more liable to associations of the ludicrous, than the serious style of our own age is at this moment. And on the same principle, in order to suppose the language of the *Iliad*, as, for example, the solemn *formulæ* which introduce all the replies and rejoinders, open to the ludicrous, they must, first of all, have had time to assume the sombre hues of antiquity. But even that is not enough: the *Iliad* must previously have become so popular, that a man might count with certainty upon his own ludicrous travesties, as applying themselves at once to a serious model, radicated in the universal feeling. Otherwise, to express the case mechanically, there is no resistance, and consequently no possibility of a rebound. Hence it is certain that the burlesques of the *Iliad* could not be Homeric, in the sense which an unlearned public imagined; and as to the satiric poem of the *Margites*, it is contrary to all the tendencies of human nature, that a public sensibility to satire should exist, until the simple age of Homer had been supplanted by an age of large cities, and a complex state of social refinement. Thus far we abjure, as monstrous moral anachronisms, the parodies and lampoons attributed to Homer. Secondly, upon the *Odyssey*, as liable to heavy suspicion, we suspend our judgment, with a weight of jealousy *against* it. But finally, as regards the *Iliad*, we hold that its noblest section has a perfect and separate unity; that it was therefore written by

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one man; that it was also written a thousand years before our Christian era; and that it has not been essentially altered. These are the elements which make up our compound meaning, when we assert the existence of Homer, in any sense interesting to modern ages. And for the affirmation of that question in that interesting sense, we believe ourselves to have offered more and weightier arguments than all which the German army of infidels have been able to muster against it.

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